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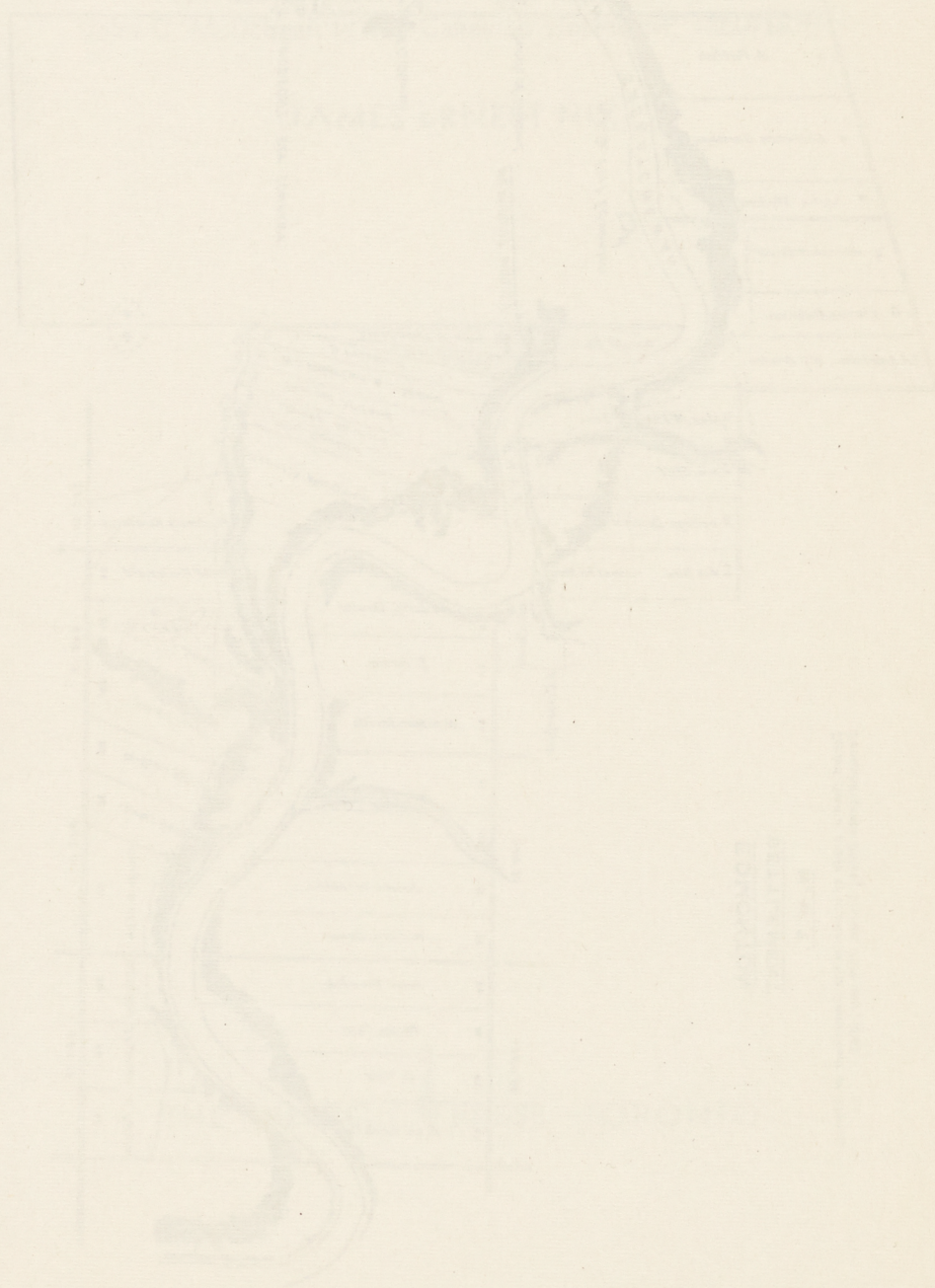
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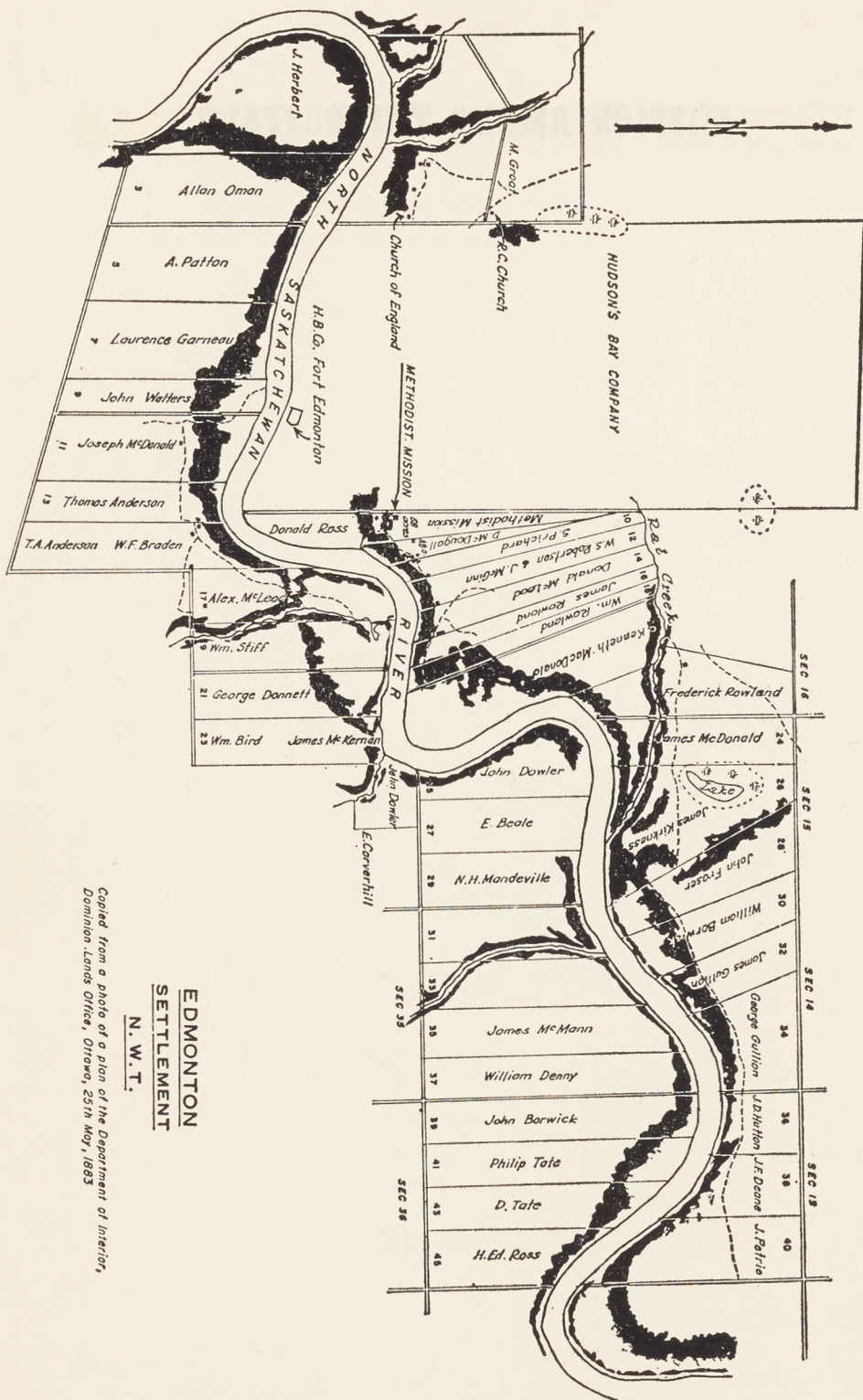
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MISSION AMONG THE BUFFALO





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MISSION AMONG THE BUFFALO

The Labours of the Reverends George M. and
John C. McDougall in the Canadian Northwest, 1860-1876

JAMES ERNEST NIX

THE RYERSON  PRESS—TORONTO

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FOREWORD

THE WRITER BELIEVES that this is a book we have been needing for a long time. The last five years have seen a quite remarkable upsurge of interest in the history of the West. Local historical societies are delving into local history; a private body, the Glenbow Foundation, has undertaken a massive project of preservation and exploration of western history; governments are beginning to recognize that public money can be spent on cultural things. All of this suggests that as a very young country we are taking our first faltering steps in developing a recognizable Canadian culture.

When we seek to understand how we came to have the Church we have, until now we have had few to guide us, or at least few who put their thoughts on paper. For we are only now passing from the time of actual living witnesses of the earlier events into the time when we must rely on written records. Thus, most of what has been generally known about the missionary McDougall family has belonged to the realm of folk-lore: a few scattered stories and anecdotes, many of them half-remembered, and only more-or-less true. The pages that follow are an attempt to put down the facts as we are able to discover them about what happened in one branch of the Christian Church in the Canadian West, just before the tide of settlers swept in and occupied the land. It is an astonishing story, combining many strands and events of an especially romantic era: aboriginal native people with a prehistoric culture; zealous missionaries with a burning passion for souls; fur-traders and adventurers in the Canadian "wild west." What a setting! And the glory of the present story is that in God's providence there arose in the service of the Church pioneer men and women who were in every respect eminently able for their task.

The McDougall story first appeared in print in occasional letters published in a little quarterly called *Missionary Notices*, a publication intended to edify the faithful with missionary information and containing letters from the missionaries in the

field. Later, John McDougall somehow managed to write his own memoirs in five volumes and part of a sixth, and a biography of his father. The former were intended to be adventure books for boys of yesterday—great tales of derring-do in the West. They were nevertheless factual, for the McDougalls lived adventurously. Other fragments of information have been gathered from many sources: early newspapers, books, and living traditions still kept in the McDougall family.

In 1960 The United Church of Canada is remembering the centenary of the entry of the McDougalls into the West, for in 1860 the Reverend George McDougall was appointed as missionary to Norway House in the Hudson's Bay Territory, and as Chairman of a vast Methodist District stretching from Hudson Bay to the Rocky Mountains. This book seeks to be a contribution to this celebration, that others of the writer's generation may possess more of our Church's heritage.

I wish to acknowledge my gratitude to several for their generous assistance: Hillhurst United Church, Calgary, who generously allowed their minister time to do this writing; Dr. John W. Grant, editor of The Ryerson Press, for his encouragement and assistance from the first; Dr. Charles F. Johnston of St. Stephen's College, Edmonton, for his expert advice in the original research; the Glenbow Foundation, Calgary, for the generous use of their facilities and materials; my wife Margaret and Mrs. Charles Orman for their patience and work in preparing the manuscript; and others who have also helped.

Although this small book does not pretend to be a professional history, being no more than a prospectus to some future history yet to be written, it may stimulate the interest of some to read further into our living past, a past which still speaks to us. The writer takes this story to be a portion of the continuing narrative of the Acts of the Apostles; and it is here offered, as a great missionary of an earlier day wrote, that "having the eyes of your hearts enlightened, that you may know what is the hope to which he has called you, what are the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints. . . ." (Ephesians 1:18).

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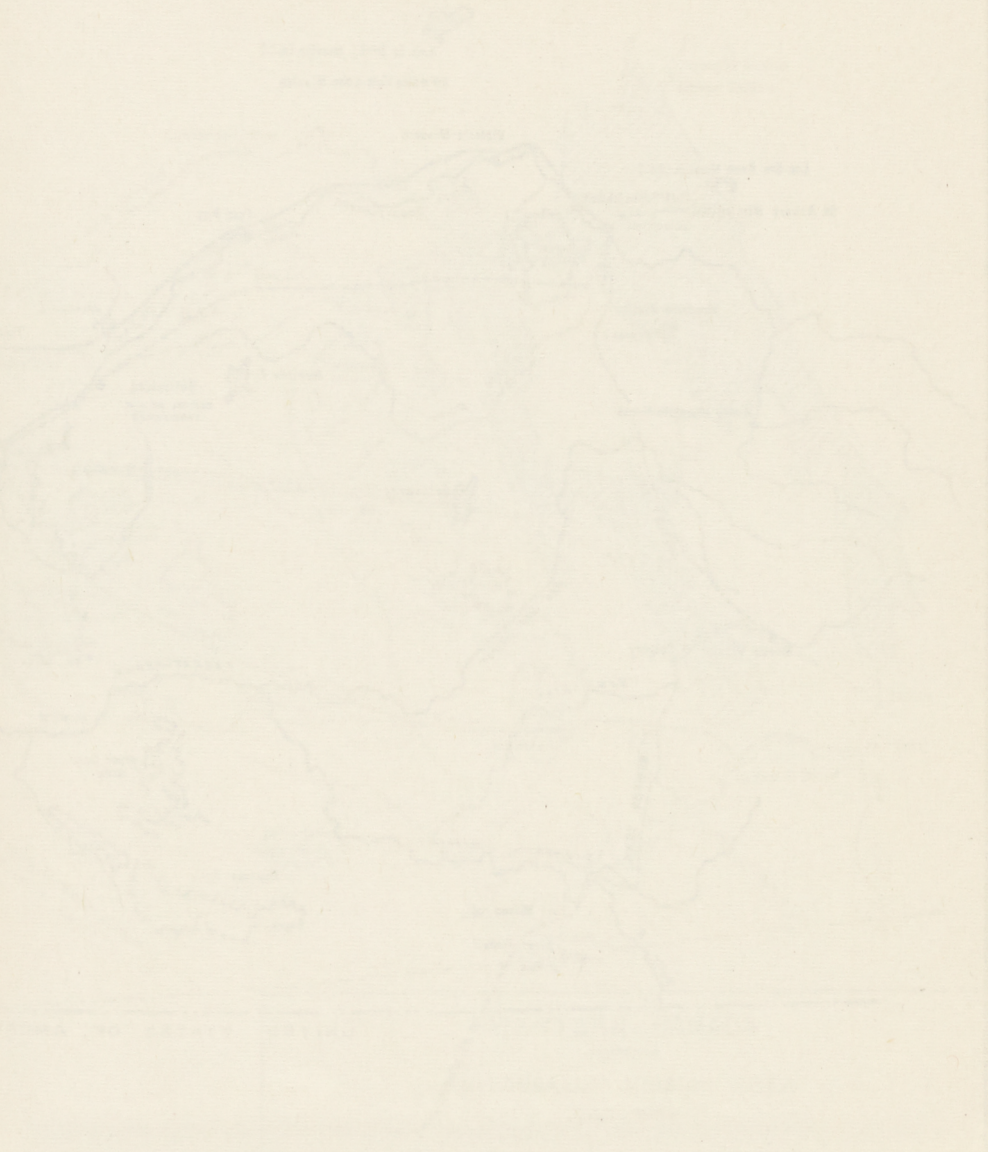
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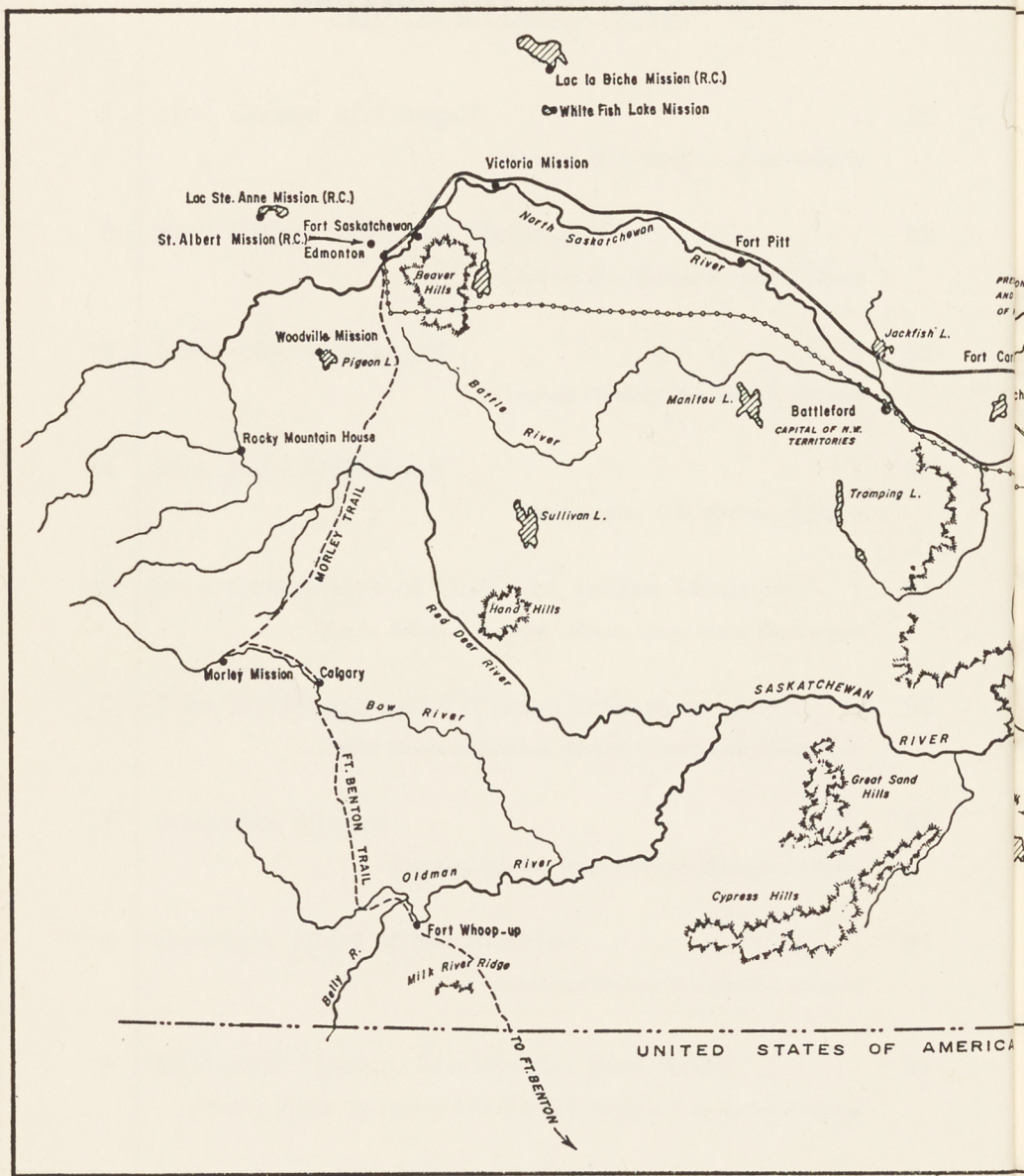
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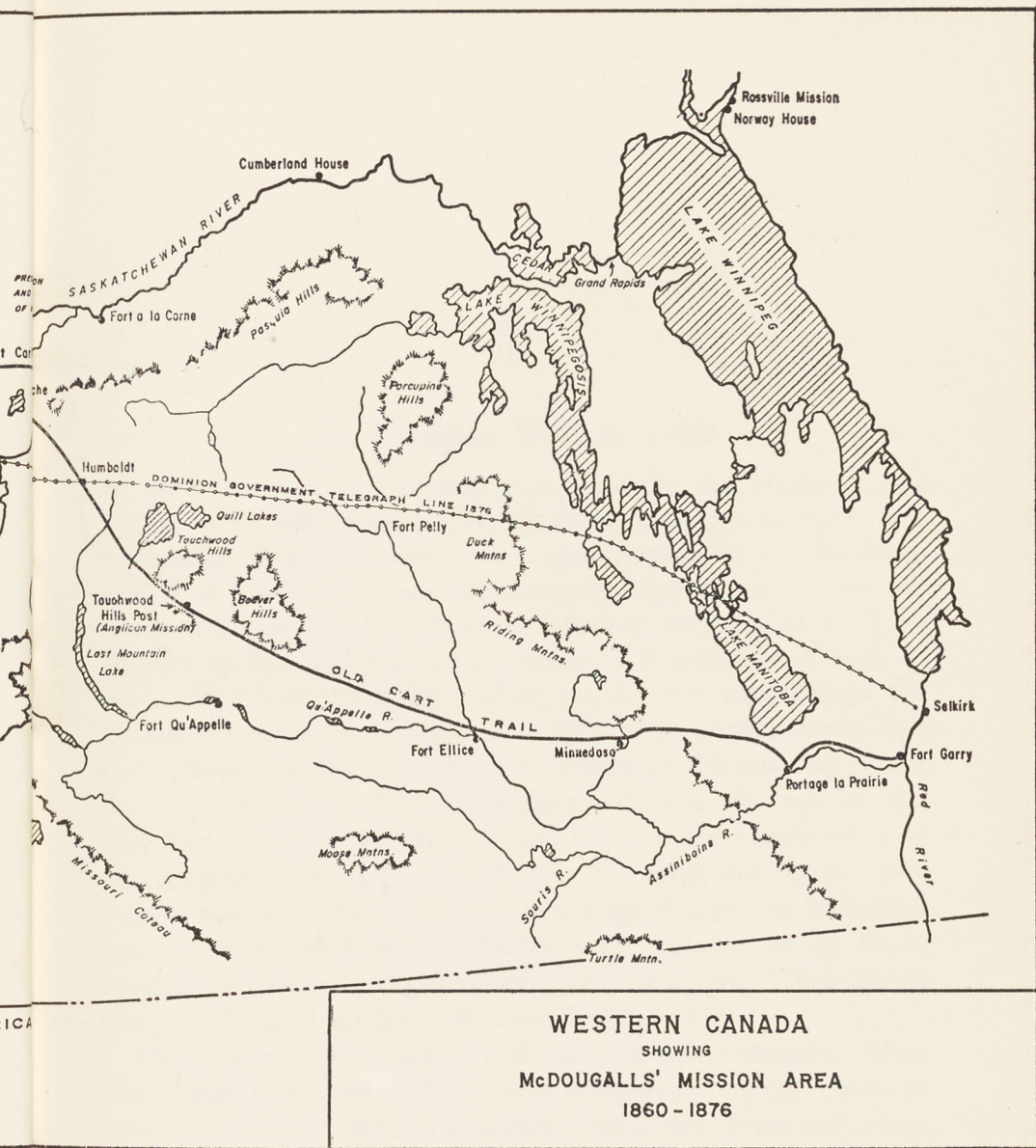
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MISSION AMONG THE BUFFALO







1

The Canadian West in 1860

BY TODAY'S STANDARDS, to make entry into the vast Hudson's Bay Territory in 1860 was a feat requiring courage, strength and endurance. Transportation was largely controlled by the Hudson's Bay Company, whose boats made trips up and down the waterways carrying furs from the forests and plains to York Factory on Hudson Bay for shipment to England, and back to the trading posts bringing trading articles and supplies for the Company's servants. Casual travellers were almost none, and those there were moved wholly or partly at the sufferance and on the hospitality of the Company. It was the era of the penetration of the railway into the heart of the continent, and of the steam boat on the Mississippi. On land, during the early part of our story, the Red River cart reigned supreme in British territory although it was gradually to be replaced by the buck-board and then by springed vehicles like the buggy. Throughout the period travel on horseback was indispensable.

All of these modes of travel had their attendant dangers. River travel was slow and tedious, and dangerous during times of flood. Travel by land was also slow, and it was slower still when the plodding but dependable ox was the motive power. River crossings were made hazardous by the absence of bridges, usually of boats and sometimes even of fords.

It is hard for us today to realize what a difference modern postal services and communication by telegraph, telephone, radio and television have made. Throughout the far-flung fur empire of the Hudson's Bay Territory, communication was difficult and intermittent. The Company's brigades brought mail packets at long intervals, but these were irregular at best. The missionaries were at times cut off from their home base for six or eight months at a time. Civil war was raging in the U.S.A. and yet their neighbours to the immediate north were nearly oblivious of it. Even communication amongst the missionaries working at the several stations in the same district was subject to weather, and the vagaries of travellers, traders or passers-by. Often rumour was a source of anguish, and there was no way to allay it unless one stopped work and went personally, often at great inconvenience or hardship, to see for oneself. Human spirits became attuned to one another and during prolonged separation extra-sensory perception sometimes seemed to be at work.

The economy, whether around the fur-trading posts or back in the hinterlands, was entirely governed by the fur-trade and the procurement of food. He who was not self-reliant and physically strong enough to fend for himself was in real danger of death. In the absence of elected government and public agencies for the care of the poor, the ancient rule of "survival of the fittest" applied. The Company had a rule forbidding their factors from allowing ne'er-do-wells and hangers-on to congregate around the posts at its expense. This rule (reasonable in its way, for the Company was in business, not charity—not infrequently the posts themselves were near starvation) sometimes threw the poor and starving or incompetents upon the mission stations, who could not well refuse them. All life was, of necessity, geared to the rhythm of the hunt, for not to hunt was to starve. At some Hudson's Bay posts the Factor had a small kitchen garden or field of grain to eke out the hunt, but it was a sideline. Early ripening strains of grain had not yet been developed and the crops were often blighted by early frost, grasshoppers or other disaster. In our time, when stores carrying a bewildering variety of processed foods in abundant quantity cater to every community even in our remote areas, it is hard for us to remember

what it was like when survival depended on the chance of the hunt, the migrations of the buffalo, the weather, the availability and ability of men to do the hunting or fishing. When one considers the multiplicity of tasks to be done to keep the pioneer household functioning, such as the procurement of building materials, fuel and clothing, the wonder is that the missionaries were able to accomplish the religious work that they did.

INDIAN TRIBES AND THEIR MODE OF LIVING

BEFORE THE COMING of the white man the primitive Indian society, which was to be uprooted in so short a space of time, was neither progressive nor peaceful. In the area that was to be the scene of the McDougalls' mission, roughly the basin of the two Saskatchewan rivers, certain topographical features determined the normal ranges of the various tribes. The central and southern reaches were dominated by the Blackfoot nation, consisting of the Blackfoot, Blood, and Piegan tribes, with the Sarcees allied to them. These occupied the country from the North Saskatchewan River south to the Missouri, passing freely to and fro over the present international boundary. In their combined strength they were the most numerous and war-like Indians on the plains. The Assiniboines (locally called the Stoneys) occupied the foothills on the east side of the Rocky Mountains. The Crees ranged north of the North Saskatchewan River and eastward toward the Hudson Bay. Though there were periods of peace between the tribes, fighting could break out at any time and local warfare or skirmishing was a regular feature of Indian life. The arrival of white traders in the employ of the Hudson's Bay or North West Companies, or of the occasional party of explorers, did nothing to change this pattern until the arrival of the North West Mounted Police in 1874. The entry of American free-traders, who established their trading posts as far north as present-day Calgary from 1868 on, only served to aggravate the situation, because they traded liquor with the Indians and generally impoverished them in their ruthless trade.

The McDougalls were to find that the various tribes possessed their own distinguishing characteristics and qualities. The Methodists and the Mountain Stoney seemed to find an immediate affinity for each other. John described them as "quick, impetuous, nervous, full of surprises. Like the torrents and avalanches in the mountains, so these men were moved and stirred . . . Warriors and hunters they were because of their environment, surely the bravest and most expert hunters of all the aboriginal peoples in this wide Dominion."¹ They found the Blackfeet to be "strapping, big and fine looking Indians, each and every one of these carrying himself with dignity and as a gentleman. I often asked myself Who taught these wandering people the art of bearing themselves with grace and perfection in style and manner, there being nothing clumsy or embarrassed about them?"² They bore the finest physical appearance of any of the Indians they met. The Blackfeet were entirely dependent on the buffalo for food, clothing, their skin lodges, their saddles and other accoutrements, all made out of buffalo hide. The Blackfeet commonly practiced polygamy, one family consisting of husband and three wives, another of husband and seven wives. Speaking of the Bloods, a more southerly tribe, John said: "Proud arrogance and intense self-sufficiency seemed to speak out in their every word and action. One would think they were the aristocracy of the plains."

The Crees, among whom the McDougalls were to do much of their work at Norway House, along the North Saskatchewan River and in the vicinity of Pigeon Lake, were themselves divided into several distinct types. One type they called the "semi-Wood and Plain Cree," an adaptable man who was at home in either forest or plain, with others in families or groups or alone. A second type of Cree was described as "true woodmen, who almost shunned the plains." These acquired great insight into woodcraft and animal lore. "Brave and docile, believing and humble, these were the earliest converts to Christianity, and also were the most easily handled by the great trading company. . ." A third type were the Plain Crees, "the aristocrats of the nation [i.e. the Cree Nation]; they looked with disdain and contempt upon the Wood Indians. They lived in large camps and flocked

together, and while they were constantly at war, were not nearly as brave as the Woodmen they so despised.”³ John McDougall believed that they spoke a purer form of the Cree language than the other types but were conceited in their attitude.

The mixed-bloods, or half-breeds, constituted still another segment of society. For the most part, those who came under the Methodist influence were of English or Canadian fathers and Indian mothers. The missionaries found them easily influenced for good or ill, “a speculative, adventurous, roving white race of men for fathers, and nomadic, homeless, natural people for mothers. Here was a new experiment in the race problem—a strong, weak people—a paradox in humanity.” The English mixed-bloods were more inclined to settle and take up farming than were the French mixed-bloods, who were more dependent on the hunt.

Principal Grant gives an illuminating account of the mixed-bloods he observed while on the Sandford Fleming expedition of 1872:

The population of these [settlements] consists entirely of half-breeds, and their method of farming is unique. They are farmers, hunters, fishermen, voyageurs, all in one; the soil is scratched, three inches deep, early in May, some seed thrown in, and then the whole household go off to hunt the buffalo. They get back about the first of August, spend the month haying and harvesting, and are off to the fall hunt early in September. Some are now so devoted to farming that they only go to one hunt in the year. It is astonishing that, though knowing so well how not to do it, they raise some wheat and a good deal of barley, oats and potatoes. There is a great difference, however, between the Scotch and French half-breeds. The French who intermarried with the Indians often became as the Indians. . . The squaw was treated as his wife. Her people became his people, but his God her God. The children have all the Indian characteristics, the habits, weaknesses, and ill-regulated passions of nomads. They excel the Indian in strength of body and endurance. They beat him on his own field of hunting, running, riding, power of eating or when necessary of abstinence; with these are united much of French vivacity, love of amusement, hospitality, patience, courtesy of manner, and warmth of affection. When a Scotchman marries a squaw her position, on the contrary, was frequently not much higher than a servant's. He

was "the superior person" of the house. He continued Christian after his fashion, she continued pagan. The granite of his nature resisted fusion in spite of family and tribal influences, the attrition of all surrounding circumstances, and the total absence of civilization; and the wife was too completely separated from him to be able to raise herself to his level. The children of such a couple take more after the father than the mother. As a rule they are shrewd, steady and industrious. A Scotch half-breed has generally a field of wheat before or behind his house, stacks, barn, and provisions for a year ahead, in his granary. The Métis has a patch of potatoes or a little barley, and in a year of scarcity draws his belt tighter or starves.⁴

THE STATE OF THE HUDSON'S BAY COMPANY

CHARLES II OF ENGLAND had granted his royal charter to Prince Rupert and seventeen other noblemen and gentlemen in 1670, incorporating them as the "Governor and Company of adventurers of England trading into Hudson's Bay." The "Honourable Company" had a stormy history during the early part of its sway as monopolist, due to opposition from the French during their regime in Canada and, later, to the commercial rivalry of the Canadian North-West Fur Company, until in 1821 the two companies finally combined into one. In 1838 the Company received from the Imperial government a renewal of its licence to trade for a period of twenty-one years, and when this expired in 1859 it was not renewed. The actual deed of surrender was dated November 19, 1869. The Company retained its rights to trade in the country, received a cash settlement of £300,000 and certain land grants around each company trading post.

In 1811 the Hudson's Bay Company had granted to Lord Selkirk a tract of over 115,000 square miles, in present-day Manitoba, upon which a farming colony was settled. Later the Company did little to encourage the idea of settlement in the west. By 1857, when the licence to trade was coming up again for renewal, the Imperial government appointed a "Select Committee" to consider the question. The Committee heard a variety of witnesses, including Sir George Simpson, Governor of the Company, who proved to be a cautious witness. During the same year the colonial office appointed Captain John Palliser

to make an independent exploration of the territory between the Red River and the Rocky Mountains. Palliser's reports were voluminous, and tended to be conservative in their estimates. The Canadian government sent out its own exploration party under S. J. Dawson and Professor H. Y. Hind. These two investigations agreed in recommending the wooded or park areas as suitable for agriculture, and both eliminated a portion of the south of Manitoba, Saskatchewan, and Alberta with its apex at a point south of Saskatoon, as semi-arid and unsuitable. During the period 1860-1885, a great volume of diverse reports reached the main centres of population sent back by survey parties such as that of Sandford Fleming in 1872, and by many occasional travellers such as Lord Southesk (1859), Milton and Cheadle (1862) and Captain W. F. Butler (1870), to name only a few. In the main, the older parts of Canada at this time were apathetic toward the west, being more engaged in the struggle leading up to Confederation and political problems associated with it than in a region they knew little or nothing about.

EARLY MISSIONS

By 1860 SEVERAL Christian denominations were well established in the Hudson's Bay Territory. Religious work had been carried on by the Anglicans and the Roman Catholics for forty years, and by the Methodists, first from England and then from Canada, for twenty. As early as 1816 there was a group of humane-minded men on the directorate of the Hudson's Bay Company in London who were making inquiries of Governor Semple "as to the prospect of success in civilization and converting to Christianity the children of Native Indians."⁵

In 1819 the committee appointed the Rev. John West, M.A., to be chaplain "for the purpose of affording religious instruction and consolation to the Company's retired servants and other Inhabitants of the Settlement, and also of affording religious instruction and consolation to the Servants in the active employment of the Company upon such occasions as the nature of the Country and other circumstances will permit." The settlement referred to was Lord Selkirk's colony on the Red River. West

arrived on the ground on October 14, 1820, and moved into Fort Douglas, where the first services were held. Although his mission was to the Company's servants and not to the colony, he had a free hand and established a school among the Scottish settlers, in which he placed a schoolmaster. Morton remarks, "As the majority of the settlers were Presbyterian, his welcome in the colony was none too cordial, but he won the respect of the community as a man." West also interested himself in the education of the Indian children, building a school and two residences for boys and girls near his residence. He succeeded also in building a church, the Company providing much of the money, the settlers, including the Presbyterians, giving their labour. It was opened on June 10, 1823, when Mr. West addressed his people in farewell before leaving for England. He was succeeded by Rev. David Jones, sent out by the Church Missionary Society, who also became the Company's chaplain. In May, 1825, Rev. Wm. Cochrane was appointed his assistant.

The Governor and Committee of the Hudson's Bay Company looked on religion and education as means of assisting the Company in its task of ruling its territory by training the people to an orderly life. As half of the population of Red River was French-Canadian, and these were largely Roman Catholic, it was also in the interests of the Company to encourage Roman Catholic missions. The Company expressed its approbation of the work of the Roman Catholic mission at Red River under the direction of the Bishop of Juliopolis, the Rev. Joseph-Norbert Provencher, and granted his mission an annual stipend of £50 and an allowance of luxuries (tea, sugar, wine, etc.). The sum was increased in 1835 to £100 a year.

The Governor and Committee in London paid a salary of £100 per annum to Mr. Jones, £100 in 1832 for the new church, £25 a year to Mr. John Pritchard, a teacher employed by the Anglicans from 1833, and £100 per annum to the school to assist with the children's board.

The Anglican missionaries, because of their appointment as chaplains to the Company, enjoyed a position of influence in the colony second only to that of the Governor himself. In 1849 the Anglican Diocese of Rupert's Land was established with the Rev.

David Anderson, D.D., as its first bishop. The diocese was inaugurated with funds from a bequest of Chief Factor James Leith and the generous support of the Company. Earlier co-operation between the Presbyterians of the Selkirk colony and the Anglicans dropped away when the new bishop withdrew concessions of a modified ritual more to Scottish liking which had been granted by the Rev. William Cochrane. The Company repeatedly refused to assist the Presbyterians in bringing in a minister of their own church, though one had been promised by Lord Selkirk. Governor Semple was of the opinion that the difference between Roman Catholics and Protestants would not be so apparent to the natives if the Anglicans represented the Protestants. This refusal left the Scots with a grievance against the Company, and, at last, the way was paved for the coming of the first Presbyterian minister to Kildonan in 1851 in the person of the Rev. John Black from Montreal.

In 1858, testifying before the Select Committee of the Imperial Government, Bishop Anderson reported that there were thirteen Anglican mission stations, eleven English clergymen, three native clergymen, and nineteen country-born and native teachers in eighteen schools in different parts of Rupert's Land, with continuing yearly financial assistance from the Company.

In 1840 the Governor and Committee of the Hudson's Bay Company in London invited the Wesleyan Methodist Church in England to send missionaries into their domain in British North America. The English Wesleyans responded by appointing three English missionaries, the Revs. G. Barnley, W. Mason and R. T. Rundle, who sailed from Liverpool on March 16, as the *British Wesleyan Magazine* (March, 1840) put it, "to commence missionary operations among the settlers and native tribes of that vast region of North America, under the protection and chiefly at the expense of the Company, whose proposals to the Society have been of the most honourable character." The parent Society showed great wisdom in seeking the co-operation of the Canadian Methodist Church and the three English missionaries were soon joined by the Revs. James Evans, T. Hurlburt, and P. Jacobs from the Canadian Church, the last named being a native. Thus the missionary force to inaugurate the work of the

Methodists in 1840 was composed equally of English and Canadian men. Likely because the Red River was occupied by the Anglicans and Roman Catholics, the Methodists first turned their attention further north. The first five mission stations were Norway House, Edmonton House, Moose Factory, Lac la Pluie and the Pic. The three Canadians were well qualified after years of work among the Indians in Upper Canada. Both Evans and Hurlburt could claim to be Indian linguists, having made translations and done linguistic studies in the native tongues.⁶ Peter Jacobs, as noted above, was a native Indian.

James Evans, though born in England, had been many years in Canada, and had received his training for the ministry in Canada, being ordained in 1833. Evans was made Chairman of the new missionary district for the Methodists, and set up his station at Norway House. Rundle, after a short period of orientation with Evans, during which he learned the elements of the Cree language and something of Evans' system of writing it, left by the Hudson's Bay Company Saskatchewan boat for his station, Edmonton House, arriving on October 17, 1840. Rundle stayed in the Saskatchewan country, making Edmonton House his headquarters, and itinerating up and down the length and breadth of present-day Alberta from Banff on the south, north to Athabasca and east to Fort Carlton. He brought with him into the country a mixed-blood from the Hudson's Bay region, Benjamin Sinclair, to be his lay assistant, interpreter, and agricultural teacher to the Indians. When Rundle left the country in 1848 due to ill health, he left Benjamin Sinclair behind, and this man became the sole representative of Methodism from 1848 until the next Methodist appointments came in 1855. The McDougalls, both at Norway House in 1860, and later in the Saskatchewan from 1863 on, were glad to acknowledge that their work was built upon the foundations laid by Evans and Rundle.

The Anglicans did not station a missionary in what is now Alberta until the coming of the Rev. Canon William Newton to Edmonton in the fall of 1875. The Presbyterians established an Indian Mission under the Rev. James Nisbet at Prince Albert in 1866, but did not settle a missionary in Edmonton until the arrival of the Rev. Andrew Baird on October 31, 1881.

Meanwhile, true to the Hudson's Bay Company's view that the French mixed-bloods were the spiritual care of the Roman Catholic Church, Chief Factor John Rowand of Edmonton House wrote to the Rev. Joseph-Norbert Provencher, Bishop of Juliopolis at St. Boniface, requesting the services of a priest to serve the French mixed-bloods camped around Fort Edmonton. Rowand wrote first in 1838, and then more urgently in 1841. The Bishop responded by sending the Rev. A. Thibault, a priest experienced in the Indian work, who arrived in Edmonton in June, 1842. After surveying the situation, Father Thibault returned to the Red River that same season. In 1844 he founded his own missionary parish about forty-five miles northwest of Fort Edmonton on a lake he named Lac Ste. Anne. Here he gathered some forty mixed-blood families around him, hoping to teach them the ways of civilization and to initiate them into settled agriculture.

Father Thibault was succeeded in 1852 by the Rev. Albert Lacombe, who in 1859 brought three Grey Nuns from Montreal to assist him in the establishment of a school. On April 8, 1861, with the approval of the Right Rev. Alexandre Taché of St. Boniface, he moved his station to a site they had together selected overlooking the Sturgeon River, about ten miles north of Fort Edmonton. This they named St. Albert in honour of Father Lacombe's patron saint. The Rev. Albert Lacombe's ministry, continuous until his death on December 11, 1916, was nearly coterminous with that of the McDougalls and in many ways paralleled it. It well deserves the attention it has received from the historians of the region.

It would be pleasant to be able to record that these two churches, Methodist and Roman Catholic, were able to work in the same area with a common understanding, if not harmony, but such was far from the case. Here again the modern reader needs to be reminded that 1860 was fifty years earlier than the first moves towards co-operation among the Protestant churches, if the beginning of the modern ecumenical movement be reckoned from the Edinburgh Conference of 1910. Co-operation across major confessional barriers still lies ahead of us in 1960. It was a time, as Professor A. S. Morton justly remarks, "when loyalty to one's creed was a predominant characteristic of all

types of Christians.”⁷ Whatever the Roman Catholics may have thought of the Methodists from their side, it is very plain that the Methodists considered themselves to be in mortal combat with the Romanists for the souls of the people. In the last hundred years many winds theological and revolutionary have blown away at least most outward manifestations of Christian rivalry and antagonism, but unquestionably a major motivation in missionary expansion throughout the McDougalls’ period was this struggle and no account of the period could ignore it. The violence of Methodist outbursts in the missionaries’ letters and missionary conferences is striking, if not edifying. In introducing the Canadian Methodist entry into Hudson’s Bay Territory in 1854, the *Missionary Notices* for November, 1954, said: “But there is a Papal power there in wakeful exercise, only less pestiferous and godless than Paganism itself, which must be enervated and annihilated, with all the inane superstitions, and corruptions, and savagism of every debased tribe of the frigid North.”

A letter by the Rev. George McDougall, written from Victoria Mission on January 9, 1870, gives the Methodist attitude toward their Roman Catholic opponents as well as any passage. The section is headed, “THE PAPACY”:

The man of sin is powerfully represented in this country. There are five priests to one Protestant missionary; they are anti-British in their national sympathies; and if we may judge the tree by its fruits, anti-Christian in their teachings. Their converts have a zeal, but their fervour prompts them to propagate a system, not a Saviour. By them the Sabbath is desecrated, polygamy tolerated, and the Bible ignored. Their churches are the toy shops where the poor heathen get their play-things, such as idols, beads, and charms, and where the Anglo is denounced as no better than a brute beast, or, to quote from one of their sermons, “no better than the buffalo that herd on the plains.” They carry with them large pictures, representing two roads, one terminating in Paradise, the other in a bottomless pit; on the downward track, all Protestants are travelling, surrounded by demons and lost spirits. One of the tricks of these gentlemen is, when a child is born in a Protestant family, a female agent enters the tent, fondles the infant, and then, professing to show it to their friends, carries it to the priest, who baptizes the babe. The policy of the Protestant missionaries has been to avoid

controversy and simply to preach Christ. The very opposite has been the practice of the Priest. And if trouble should arise between the tribes of this country and the whites, the cause, in a large degree, will lie at the door of the Papacy.

These Priests are hard workers: summer and winter they follow the camps, suffering great privations. They are indefatigable in their efforts to make converts, and when made, if stript of the external badges of Popery, are still heathen; for of them it may be truthfully said, they have not so much as heard of the Holy Ghost. These poor baptized Pagans have never been pointed to the Lamb of God.⁸

Missionaries of all denominations, because of their incessant travels and their independence of political or commercial ties, possessed an unrivalled authority in speaking of the region, and their words were eagerly read and listened to. They played a vital part in assisting in the quiet revolution whereby a benevolent monopoly with sole rights to trade and to govern gave way first to territorial and then to provincial government. Relations between the missionary McDougalls and the Company were always to be cordial, though they had not been so in the case of some of the Wesleyans, notably James Evans at Norway House in the 1840's. The Company often relied upon the missionaries with their intimate knowledge of the native people to interpret company and government policy to the natives. The missionaries were indebted to the Company for many courtesies, hospitality and financial support.

REFERENCES

¹*On Western Trails in the Early Seventies*, pp. 20, 21.

²*Ibid.*, pp. 56, 57.

³*In the Days of the Red River Rebellion*, p. 33.

⁴*Ocean to Ocean*, p. 200.

⁵Cited by Arthur S. Morton in *A History of the Canadian West to 1870-71*, p. 631.

⁶The Translation of the entire Bible into the Cree language was the work of the missionary group under Evans at Rossville Station. John Sinclair, a mixed-blood, translated from Genesis to Esther and from Matthew to the Acts; H. B. Steinhaur (a full-blooded Ojibway) from Job to Malachi, and from Romans to Revelation. The Cree Bible, a monument in the history of the west, was published in Evans' syllabic by the British and Foreign Bible Society in London, England, in 1861 and 1862, under the supervision of the Rev. W. Mason, who had returned to England. Thomas Hurlburt, working usually in extreme isolation at remote stations, studied

the Ojibway and Chippawa languages and orthography. He was a prodigious worker and on February 2, 1872 (*Missionary Notices*, p. 228), wrote from Manitoulin: "Generally about four a.m. I am up and at work on my Indian grammar, and work until seven. During the last three years I have written about one thousand pages. Much of my work being tentative, I have gone back and reviewed the whole three times in three years . . . I cannot describe it except by saying I find about 150 elementary roots of single, simple syllables, each with definite meaning wherever found; it is a far more philosophical language than that proposed by Bishop Williams. I have the labour of 20 years on this work. It must be preserved. Probably it will be printed by the Smithsonian Institute."

⁷*Op. cit.*, p. 803.

⁸*Missionary Notices*, May, 1870, p. 102.

2

Norway House and a Western View, 1860-1863

ON SEPTEMBER 9, 1821, a child who was named George Millward was born to a Mr. and Mrs. McDougall in Kingston, Upper Canada. The McDougalls were Highland Scots, and the father was a non-commissioned officer in the Royal Navy who had been stationed at Kingston throughout the War of 1812-1814.¹

At some date not determined, when peace had rendered naval service unnecessary, the family moved to a backwoods farm near Barrie on the Penetanguishene road. Being near Georgian Bay, the father continued some sailoring activities in the lake trade, doubtless to supplement the meagre income which could be wrested from a pioneer farm. His absence from home for a great part of the year threw responsibility early upon the young son George, who learned the pioneer skills and arts, and became accustomed to the toil of clearing, farming and hunting at the very time the young Abe Lincoln was facing the same tasks in pioneer Illinois.

In rural Ontario even common schooling was not then easily come by; the consequence was that when George McDougall served a term in the militia during the disturbances of 1837, just before his seventeenth birthday, he was still unable to sign his own name to a receipt.² He won his education the "hard way" after this time at a night school near his home and later, after

he had offered himself for the ministry, during the single winter term of 1848-1849 at Victoria College, Cobourg. Leisure for study was something he never knew, and it was justly said of him:

Adverse circumstances gave but slight opportunity to repair the defects of the past. Even when, in the face of obstacles that would have daunted less resolute men, he forced his way to college, the needs of the mission field allowed him but a few months' respite before he was called away to an Indian station. From that time onward his life was one of incessant toil, but by the diligent use of odd moments in his humble home, by the camp-fire in forest or prairie, he amassed no small store of useful knowledge, and became a workman who needed not to be ashamed. He possessed, as his letters show, intellectual powers of no mean order, while as a missionary pioneer he had few equals, and, perhaps, no superior.³

What his son John calls "the grand event in his life," his religious conversion, took place in his nineteenth year during meetings held in a little schoolhouse by a local preacher, Peter White. Hitherto he had had local fame as a "chopper"—a mighty man with an axe; henceforth he desired to "improve himself," obtain some education and become a local preacher himself. On January 10, 1842, he was married to Elizabeth Chantler,⁴ an English-born and educated woman of well-to-do Quaker parentage who was two years older than he was. Elizabeth's parents had settled first in Toronto but had later become farmers in the Meaford area. At this time she was living at Tollendale, near Barrie, where her brother had a grist mill. She also had experienced a conversion in a watch-night service held at Barrie by the Rev. Thomas McMullen, and had soon joined the Methodist Church.

For the first six years of their married life George and Elizabeth McDougall were engaged on a farm near Owen Sound, and then for a season in business with Messrs. Frost & Nealand.⁵ Here George also followed briefly in his father's footsteps by building and sailing two vessels in a partnership in the lake trade. While at Owen Sound three sons were born to the McDougalls: John on December 27, 1842; David on May 14, 1845; and Moses, who died in childhood.

George McDougall was licenced as a local preacher at Owen Sound under the Rev. John Neelands; among his son John's earliest recollections were those of accompanying his father when he conducted services among the Indian peoples of this locality. At the New Year of 1849 George and Elizabeth McDougall entered Victoria College, Cobourg, leaving the two boys with friends.⁶ After one term in college McDougall was called to be an assistant to the Rev. William Case, who was head of an industrial school for Indians at Alderville. Under Case, the founder of Methodist missions to the Indians in Canada, and by this time an aged man, he received his practical training for his lifelong ministry to the Indians. At Alderville, also, the McDougalls' daughter Eliza was born and named after a much-beloved daughter of the "Elder" Case.

Having been recommended by the Cobourg District, George McDougall was received as a candidate for the ministry by the Methodist Conference of 1850 in Brockville—"on trial." In 1851, still "on trial," he was appointed to a mission of his own, "Lake Huron." There had been no previous Methodist mission in this area; the new missionary was to explore the regions north of Lakes Huron and Superior, and to establish a new mission station at a suitable location. Dr. Enoch Wood, his mission superintendent, introduced him to the Church thus:

"The Missionary is a married man, received by the conference with the express stipulation of devoting himself to the Indian work. He has spent much time with them as a trader, is already partially acquainted with the language, and promises fair for usefulness."⁷

The appointment, surely a heavy and responsible one for a man still learning his work and cumbered with a young family, was accepted by McDougall in a spirit of deep consecration:

"My destiny is the far North, among the benighted pagans. This is what I have long desired, and sometimes dared to pray for, but now that the path is opened, I feel myself to be a little child. Oh Thou Great Spirit, magnify Thy power in my weakness. Do Thine own work."⁸

After extensive consultation with the Indians themselves, the McDougall family established at Garden River, about ten

miles from Sault Ste. Marie, and spent six highly successful years at this station.⁹ In 1852 George McDougall was ordained deacon by the Methodist Conference. One might call this period his "journeyman" training, for he then began to confront the various problems that were to occupy him throughout his life: the whisky trade among the Indians; pioneer construction of a residence, church and schoolhouse; and agricultural beginnings. At Garden River, also, George McDougall became confirmed in his vocation as an Indian missionary, and showed that vision for the whole of the Indian people that later characterized him as Chairman of a vast missionary district. He wrote:

What is one solitary mission compared with the wants of this vast country? I would that we had the power to convey to the friends of Indian missions a correct idea of the suffering condition of the pagan bands of this country. Degraded and oppressed by the white man, thirsting for the fire-water, full of all the uncleanness of heathenism, they are fast passing away. Nor are they ignorant of it. Many of them are now ripe for the Gospel. They have long looked at their idols for help, but looked in vain. For the last hundred years they have hoped for help from the Jesuit, but, to use the words of one of the old men, "He brought no heart religion with him." The Indian wants Christianity in earnest. There are strong reasons why they should have it now. Yearly their minds are becoming more and more corrupted by false teachers. Yearly scores of them are dying in their sins, and in their blood.

"O Christians, to their rescue fly,
Preach Jesus to them ere they die."

Difficulties in the accomplishment of this work we may expect. Satan will, doubtless, hold on to his possessions; but "the Lord is a man of war, the Lord is His name."

Let the Church of Christ use the means, and hell shall yet tremble at, and heaven rejoice in, the full salvation of this people. Amen.¹⁰

When he was eleven or twelve the growing lad John was sent to stay with an uncle that he might attend the log schoolhouse in Owen Sound. After one winter he returned home to Garden River. Next he was placed as a grocer's boy in the store of Mr. Edward Jeffrey at Penetanguishene, where he gained useful experience in business.

During his period of service at Garden River, George McDougall was "received into full connection" with the Methodist Conference, his probationary period over. Ordination took place at Belleville on June 7, 1854.¹¹

In 1857 George McDougall was appointed to Rama, near Orillia. This was an historic spot, the scene of Jesuit labours since the days of Brébeuf and Lalemant two hundred years before. Methodist missions dated only from 1845, when the Rev. William Herkimer had begun work among the Ojibways, but the great Ojibway missionary and scholar Henry Bird Steinhaur had been born in the vicinity about 1820. McDougall soon built up the work and extended it beyond its former limits, although he had to combat the use of liquor among the Indians. He also carried on a ministry to whites, among whom he established two large circuits. Contemporary estimates described McDougall as "indefatigable," and the Rev. Horace Dean, a former missionary, wrote after a visit to Rama:

"I think brother McDougall is just the man for the place; he is kind, yet firm; zealous, yet no bigot; throwing his whole heart into the work. I trust he will be a blessing both to the whites and Indians."¹²

While the McDougall family was at Rama, John was sent to his father's alma mater, Victoria. Here, as he related in *Forest, Lake and Prairie*, he had to win his own way, being at first conspicuous as the "Indian fellow" but after some youthful tussles winning the respect of his classmates. Keeping John in college was evidently too severe a strain on the parental purse, however.¹³ After a year of classes he had to go to work again, this time as a clerk in the store of Thomas Moffatt of Orillia, where he was able to use his knowledge of the native language in dealing with the Indians. At the end of a year, having saved all but \$10 of his \$60 wages, he was able to return to college. This time he was immediately at home in the college environment, and ever afterward he looked back to the academic year 1859-1860 as a "green spot" in his memory. It was his last formal schooling, for once again the exigencies of the mission field intervened in the life of the McDougall family. "To his great surprise," said

John, the Rev. George McDougall was appointed to be missionary to Norway House and Chairman of a vast District. The father asked John to accompany the family to this new post, and though the son had hoped to continue his education he dutifully put these thoughts aside when the father said "My son, I want you to go with me." It was the opening of a new chapter in the religious history of the Canadian West. It was also the introduction which grew into a love affair between a missionary family and the great West—a love affair which was to be terminated only by death.

NORWAY HOUSE

THUS, AFTER ten years of exacting apprenticeship, training and experience as an Indian missionary, the Rev. George McDougall was appointed by the Canada Conference of the Wesleyan Methodist Church to be missionary at Rossville, Norway House, Hudson's Bay Territory. The Conference sat in June, and his letter of authorization, dated July 10, 1860, appointed him not only to Rossville but also as Chairman of the District embracing a sub-continent in itself: "Oxford House, Edmonton, White Fish Lake, Lac la Pluie, *etc.*," the object of his mission being "the welfare of the Indian Tribes within the Honourable Company's territory." It was a roving commission: never was an *et cetera* more eloquent. The Chairman's feet were set in a large room.

Rossville had been located by its founder, James Evans, at a strategic neck of the land where the fur-trade of the vast Hudson's Bay territory funnel led from the north, west and south, and converged on its way to England via the Bay. The mission station was named in graceful compliment to D. Ross, Esq., Gentleman in charge of Norway House for the Hudson's Bay Company in 1840, a man helpful and sympathetic to the work.

"Church and State," represented by mission and chartered company, were separated physically as well as in organization, and Rossville was some 2½ miles distant from the fort on a favourable site. At this time the mission settlement included a well built church seating three hundred persons, a strongly built

school able to accommodate more than a hundred children, a printing office for the mission, a parsonage (by this time in poor repair and needing to be rebuilt) and a collection of good log houses in which the Indians lived. Sir George Simpson, Governor-in-Chief of the Company, had visited the mission in 1858 and pronounced his "heartly approval" of all that he had seen. More houses were a-building, and thought was being given to the enlargement of the church. Ten class-meetings of Indians organized after the Wesleyan pattern, met weekly. Prayer meetings were held twice a week. Sunday services were at 6 a.m. (Cree), 11 a.m. (English) and 3 p.m. (Cree), concluding with an evening prayer meeting conducted by the Indians.

Rossville station had not been able to maintain the promise it had held fifteen years before under the dynamic leadership of Evans. Advance had been followed by recession, success by failure. Now, however, a fresh and steady hand was supplied. George McDougall, confronting a country new to him, plied his fellow-travellers with questions, made his own observations and considered its suitability for future settlement, believing his commission to be missionary work to "go on until the last western wigwam has been entered, and the last pagan brought to the feet of Christ."

From the beginning McDougall recognized that his work was to be twofold: his own pastoral labours *vis-à-vis* the whites and Indians he could reach; and his role as prophet and advocate communicating his findings back to Church and State in distant Canada. He saw that in an era of transition he was called to protect and assist the "original proprietors" of the land, and to do what he could to save them from poverty, neglect and possibly extinction.

One immediate problem was that of depletion of the resources of the Norway House region. McDougall quickly realized that even in 1860 the Indians' traditional source of food, the wild-life in the area, was steadily decreasing, and that the fresh-water fish, which had become the staple article, were also showing signs of failing. He noted the disposition of the Indians to migrate ever south, in search of better food and land, and he feared the attraction of the Red River settlement and the French

Catholic mixed-bloods, demoralized by the American free-traders who were crossing the border. He felt that the answer was to establish a centre for the Protestant Indians further south, where agriculture could be carried on successfully.

Right at Rossville, however, a social evil to be attacked immediately was the use of rum by the native people. Though by some accounts the Hudson's Bay Company had long before ceased to trade fire-water to the Indians, the McDougalls encountered the practice on their arrival, and soon afterwards the Company gave it up.

The new superintendent was not long at his post before ranging out on snowshoe one hundred and fifty miles to visit his missionary colleagues the Rev. and Mrs. Charles Stringfellow at Jacksonville, and the Hudson's Bay people at Oxford House, where a service was held. In ten days he was back home, projecting other trips.

At Norway House he met the crews of the summer brigades arriving from the Mackenzie, Athabasca, Saskatchewan and Red rivers, all of them en route to York Factory to unload their furs. The arrival of the brigades was the time of general celebration, the river banks around the post being lined with boats and tents. English and French, Norwegian, Ojibway and Cree dialects mingled over many camp-fires. Sometimes rum flowed freely, and rival voyageurs found that they had old scores to settle. Such periods brought their trials and responsibilities to the chaplain at Norway House, as well as opportunities to gather these transient peoples from afar for a brief period into the mission church. Other work was the counselling of the Indians of his own settlement who were about to leave for their summer's work on the Hudson's Bay brigade, as well as the regular work with the class leaders and local preachers of the mission.

Two events turned his thoughts westward. Supervision of the mission work in the area took him to the Grand Rapids, the point at which the Saskatchewan River flows into Lake Winnipeg. The people there had thrice requested that a missionary be placed among them, and others had pointed out the strategic possibilities of the place. To visit Grand Rapids was to think of this mighty river as a highway spanning the continent to the foot of

the shining mountains, where, to this time, only Methodism represented Protestantism. The other event was the presence at Norway House of Chief Factor W. J. Christie, from Edmonton. Hearing of Mr. McDougall's intention to visit the western missions, he offered means of transport the following summer.

FIRST SURVEY OF THE FAR WEST — SUMMER, 1862

ACCORDINGLY George McDougall and his son John, then a youth of nineteen, made the long journey from Norway House to the Saskatchewan missions. The father travelled south by boat to Fort Garry, then across the plain on horseback on the old cart trail to Fort Carlton, at this time one of the chief distributing posts for the Company. John, meanwhile, would come up the Saskatchewan River with the summer brigade, and the two would meet at Fort Carlton.

The long period of the Honourable Company's regime was nearing its end, and with it was coming the end of constant river travel up and down the Saskatchewan. This was the only time that John McDougall was ever to travel the Saskatchewan over this distance for henceforth he would go overland in the saddle. For a youth of his age it was high adventure to be one of a dozen passengers scattered through a "fleet" of York boats bound for the Great West, and to see the immemorial struggle of men against river.

First the Grand Rapids, a distance of about three miles, had to be portaged. Up the first two miles the cumbersome York boats¹⁴ were pulled by long ropes and sheer man-power. Then for the final mile the boats must be unloaded, pulled out of the water, and dragged the distance on skids and rollers. The freight must be carried, two hundred pounds to the trip, on the backs of the men. Beyond the rapids, the usual upstream course was followed. The men alternately rowed and, hitching themselves to long ropes, walked or ran along the banks for miles. Four men spelled each other off, all eight worked together over the more difficult parts, and crossing from side to side of the river to find better

"tracking." It was slavish work. John arrived at Fort Carlton fifteen days ahead of his father, having come much the shorter distance.

Reunited, father and son pushed on west, with horses, saddles, tent and guide, furnished by Mr. W. L. Hardisty, Chief Trader for the Company under Mr. Christie at Fort Edmonton. As they went, the McDougalls showed the enthusiasm of a pair of land-agents scouting a future subdivision. "The whole land," said John looking at the future site of Prince Albert, "seemed to me as speaking out in strong invitation to come and occupy."¹⁵ The father had his own story to tell of the wide plains over which he had just come: "Every mile we came is abundantly fit for settlement, and the day will come when it will be taken up and developed."¹⁶ As they rode they amused themselves by locating farmsteads, communities and villages, even railway lines, in imagination. They were filled with a vast exhilaration at all they saw.

The guide supplied by Mr. Hardisty was a mixed-blood named "Legrace" or "La Gress," an old man popularly called "Grease" or "Greasy." He was cook as well as guide, and the epithet would likely fit his cooking, his person, or both. Ten years later he was employed by the Sandford Fleming expedition over this same route. McDougall called him "small and wiry"; the Rev. Geo. Grant, secretary to Fleming, said he was "dried up as a mummy," old and stupid, an incurable smoker and talker. No love was lost between the old guide and Grant, but to John he was "a man full of adventure, travel . . . interest," a mine of information to a young man willing to listen.

Heading for the White Fish Lake Mission they were fortunate in meeting Peter Erasmus, mixed-blood assistant to the Rev. H. Steinhaur, bringing supplies over the trail from Red River. Erasmus was an expert interpreter, so the father attached him to his party in this capacity for the rest of the journey. Later he was to become McDougall's interpreter and general assistant in the work at Victoria Mission.

The White Fish Lake Mission had been carefully located by the missionary to be within reach of the plains, and hence of the vital source of food, but yet sufficiently far into the wooded parklands

north of the Saskatchewan River to be out of the normal range of the marauding Blackfeet. On arrival at White Fish Lake the McDougalls found the Rev. Mr. Steinhaur about to set off for the plains after the buffalo. With Steinhaur was Benjamin Sinclair, the Rev. Robert Rundle's old lay assistant. This was the man who had bridged the ministerial gap from Rundle's departure in 1848 until the new missionaries Steinhaur and Woolsey came in 1855. Here the McDougalls also learned from some returning hunters where the Cree chief Maskepetoon and his band could be found on the plains. This man was a key Indian whom McDougall was anxious to meet. A rendezvous was arranged for the whole group on the plains.

Father and son now went a further three days' travel west to find the other Wesleyan missionary in the western field, the Rev. Thomas Woolsey, who, says John, "was attempting" the establishment of a mission near present-day Smoky Lake. Mr. Woolsey had been at this spot less than a year, and a small house, a roofless stable, an interpreter and two "hired men" were the entire settlement to this time. After hard travelling the McDougall party were nearly out of food, and the Woolsey station was too, so the situation was met by Mr. Woolsey butchering one of his work oxen to produce, wrote John afterwards, "some of the toughest beef I ever tackled."

The journey continued with the addition of Mr. Woolsey and his interpreter William Monckman. Striking south, they again reached the banks of the Saskatchewan River. Mr. McDougall was so pleased with the look of this site at the northernmost bend of the river, where there were wide benches suitable for farming, that he persuaded Mr. Woolsey that he ought to move his mission from Smoky Lake to it. When established, the station would be called "Victoria" after the great Queen, though it was several years before the Society in Toronto caught up with the fact that it was located on a river, and not on "Victoria Lake."

The problem now confronting the missionaries was how to cross the mighty Saskatchewan where there was no regular crossing—no ford, ferry, bridge or boat—and John relates how they accomplished it.¹⁷ Peter Erasmus was equal to the occasion. A

hoop about six feet in diameter was made of willows. A large oilcloth was then spread on the beach and the hoop placed on it, with the corners and sides of the cloth folded over. Now all their gear was placed on top, and the whole carried into the water. Next the two missionaries were invited to get into "this thing, which looked like a huge nest floating on the water." Next a buffalo rawhide line was attached, one end to the craft, the other to a horse's tail. Then Erasmus led the horse into the river, and swam beside it to the other side. The rest of the party followed, each being towed by his horse's tail.

Chief Maskepetoon and his large camp of Crees were encountered in the "Battle River country," otherwise known as the country of the dreaded and warlike Blackfeet Indians. All who travelled in or through it were armed and vigilant against surprise attack. To meet this large camp of men, women and children living in their primeval state, to observe their dress, camping customs and mode of living, was a source of intense interest to both McDougalls. They were received with great kindness by the chief, and a series of evangelistic meetings was held. Reporting on this occasion to his superintendent in Toronto, McDougall remarked: "Seventeen times we pointed them to the Lamb of God" . . . The McDougalls were able to establish continuity with their predecessors, for Steinhaur and Woolsey were present; the pipe of peace was smoked. Many of the Indians knew the syllabic Cree writing, and the previous winter some had received part or all of the New Testament, now published in their own language by the British and Foreign Bible Society in London. Maskepetoon, reported the elder McDougall, read two chapters daily, and when visited in his tent was reading the eighth chapter of Romans.

THE EARLY MISSIONARY APPROACH TO THE CREES

BECAUSE THIS INITIAL meeting with the summer camp of the Crees set the pattern for the McDougalls' approach to them, it is worthwhile to note it in detail. When the "camp-meeting" had been announced by the Indian herald, all gathered around, the Christian Indians nearest the missionaries, the pagan Indians,

distinguished by "their fierce restless eyes and blood-stained faces," in the background. Whether Christian or not, all gave respectful attention, "the instinctive courtesy of the natural man." During some hymns sung by the missionaries and Christian Indians the crowd gathered, then Mr. Steinhaur led in prayer, and George McDougall, assisted by that "prince of interpreters" Peter Erasmus, gave the address. It is doubtful whether the McDougall sermons were ever written. But at least this key address, which may be taken as typical of many, was reported by his son John, and may best be read in John's own account:

He told of the coming of Jesus, how he found the world in darkness, and men worshipping idols, etc.; of the commission given to man to preach the Gospel to every creature; what this Gospel had done for the nations who had accepted it. He showed that true civilization originated in and was caused by Christianity. He said that it was because of the command of Jesus, eastern Christians were constrained to send missionaries to the Saskatchewan; that the purpose was for the best good of the people, both present and eternal.

He congratulated them on their country.

He foretold the extinction of the buffalo, and the suppression of tribal war, and the necessity of this people's preparing for a great change in their mode and manner of life; that it was the business of himself and brethren to teach and prepare them for the change which was bound to come.

He prophesied the ultimate settling of this country.

He assured them that the Government would do the fair and just thing by them; that this had been the history of the British Government in her dealings with the Indians, always to do justly and rightly by them.

He congratulated them on having a chief like Maskepetoon, who while brave and strong, was a lover of peace, and earnestly desirous of helping his people in every way.

He urged them to listen to him and obey him.

He told them that, if God spared his life, his purpose was to come and dwell with them in this great country God had given them.

He assured them of the profound interest all Christian people had in them, and urged them to have full faith in the Great Spirit and in His Son Jesus.¹⁸

This reported address may be taken to be the McDougalls' manifesto and nowhere does a better or more complete statement of their purpose and motivation occur. It shows throughout (to use the modern psychological jargon) the intense empathy which from first to last characterized the missionary McDougalls in their approach to the Indian.

The service being over, Chief Maskepetoon arose to make reply in traditional Indian fashion, addressing the crowd:

My people, I told you that my friend from the east would speak to you words of wisdom and truth. You have listened to him, and I want you to think of what you have heard. Let this sink into your hearts, for all my friend has said will come to pass. The Great Spirit has sent these praying men to teach us His will . . . Now let the guards be set for tonight, and let there be no recurrence of what took place last night. Someone slept at his post, and the enemy came within the circle of tents, and if he had not been detected would have stolen, and perhaps killed. Shame on the young man who would allow that to happen! Go now to your tents, put the camp in order, and remember our friends are tired; they have ridden far. Let there be no unnecessary noise, no drumming or gambling tonight. Let the camp be quiet; let our friends rest in peace.¹⁸

The mission to the Plains Crees had begun. "Farewell, ye simple children of the plains," was George McDougall's valediction to them, "May the Holy Spirit accompany with converting and sanctifying power the living truths to which you have listened."

And now, as September had come on, the missionary must press on before the winter caught him.

REFERENCES

¹Very little is known at present about the antecedents of the Reverend George and Elizabeth Chantler McDougall. The former's birth date, never before published, and previously supposed to be 1820 (*Missionary Notices*, series 3, August, 1876, G. M. McDougall's obituary on p. 138), is preserved in a McDougall family Bible in the possession of Mrs. May McDougall Ross of Calgary. We do not know the Christian names of George McDougall's parents, although Mrs. J. E. Graham of Calgary has a very old picture of George McDougall's father.

²J. McDougall, *George M. McDougall*, p. 12.

³*Ibid.*, p. vi., from the introduction to the biography, written by the Missionary Superintendent, the Rev. Alexander Sutherland, a colleague of McDougall's.

⁴For a short biography of Elizabeth Chantler McDougall, see E. Kells, *Elizabeth McDougall*, Toronto, Ryerson, 1934.

⁵The obituary (cf. n.¹ *supra*) remarks that this business relationship ended "rather abruptly," but gives no details.

⁶John McDougall refers several times in his biography (e.g., on p. 18) to his father's "journal." It is not known whether this journal is extant at time of writing (1960).

⁷It was somewhat irregular according to Methodist regulations to accept a married probationer. Dr. Wood explains the exception by referring to his express designation to the Indian work, a condition from which the missionary never wavered.

⁸Cited in *G. M. McDougall*, p. 20; an entry dated Alderville, June 23, 1851.

⁹For occasional letters written at this time see *Wesleyan Missionary Notices*, British Conference, before 1860. Another account of the work at Garden River is an article by James Scott Duncan, "An Outpost of Early Methodism," in *The New Outlook*, Toronto, October 19, 1932.

¹⁰Cited in *G. M. McDougall*, pp. 32, 33. No date is given.

¹¹George McDougall's ordination Bible is preserved in the original Methodist Church Museum, in Edmonton. Unfortunately it is without the original covers and inscription page.

¹²*Missionary Notices*, series 1, p. 243; letter dated Thornhill, January 10, 1858.

¹³Missionary salaries were hardly munificent. While at Garden River George McDougall was receiving \$320 per annum from the Board. A kind friend, P. S. Church, wrote to the Mission Board suggesting: "I am satisfied he cannot live at least comfortably on that amount, with his present family. I believe should you increase his pay to \$400, that with such contributions as would be made here, he would be able to get on very well." (*G. M. McDougall*, p. 45.)

¹⁴The York boat was the H. B. Co.'s own creation, designed and built by its employees for river freighting. The boats were of "selected spruce in two sizes, one twenty-eight feet long, and a larger type forty feet long with a ten-foot beam, with bow and stern posts cut in at an angle of forty-five degrees so as to be more easily moved off obstructions met in rapids." (D. Mackay, *The Honourable Company*, p. 249.) A single York boat survives, preserved in the Lower Fort, near Winnipeg.

¹⁵*Forest, Lake and Prairie*, p. 130.

¹⁶*Ibid.*, p. 138.

¹⁷John McDougall's books, written years later, are made lively by his accounts of day-to-day living in the west. Frank Gilbert Roe states in his book *The North American Buffalo, A Critical Study of the Species in its Wild State*, p. 909: "McDougall's writings are not professedly 'scientific'; their unpretentious accuracy makes them so. As unconscious revelations of a long experience they are of unrivalled authority for daily life in their region."

¹⁸*Forest, Lake and Prairie*, pp. 195-198.

3

Laying Foundations in Alberta, 1863-1869

AS A RESULT of his missionary trip across the plains, George McDougall determined to move his family westward into the Saskatchewan territory. Success and failure both contributed to his decision. The response to his first efforts among the Plains Crees promised good results if efforts among them could be intensified. Failure to reach the Stoneys, at that time far to the south, emphasized the urgency of following up Rundle's earlier work among them. They had long remained faithful, but without a missionary they might easily revert to paganism.

McDougall made his decision in the course of the tour, promising the Crees that he would return the following summer and offering as a pledge of his good faith to leave his son John in the country over the winter. Then, leaving the Cree camp, the party travelled northwesterly to Fort Edmonton, the first impression of which was that the Hudson's Bay Company was "nothing more than a fur-trading organization; they were not settlers, nor farmers. Pelts and not bread, furs and not homes, were what they aimed at." The elder McDougall now obtained a skiff and two men, and made haste down the river, reaching Norway House on the 6th of October, after a total journey of nearly four months.

On December 25, he wrote of the trip to the Superintendent of Missions, describing the lawless conditions prevailing in the

Saskatchewan, reporting his inability to visit the Stoney Indians and declaring his determination to take up residence among them the following summer. John commented, "Being conscious of divine guidance in this matter, he conferred not with flesh and blood very much, nor owing to the difficulty of communication with the east, did he have time to obtain the sanction of those in authority as regards his contemplated movements."

At Rossville Mission preparations were made for a move by bringing the Rev. Charles Stringfellow from Oxford House. John and Mr. Woolsey began preparatory haying, ploughing, lumbering and building at the future Victoria mission.

The Hudson's Bay Company provided for the move of the McDougall family by furnishing two York boats for a trip up the Saskatchewan. These travelled ahead of the regular summer brigade. About the latter part of July a brigade making a trip down river on its way from Fort Edmonton to Fort Carlton passed the new Victoria station, and Mr. Hardisty, who was with them, invited John McDougall to go down river to meet his family on their way. John gladly accepted and after two days they met the two boats being tracked up river.

The parents reported a tedious journey. All were sunburned and had been tortured by flies and mosquitoes and the burning summer heat. In addition to the care of her own family, Mrs. McDougall had been nursing a carpenter named Larsen, whom they were bringing with them and who had been accidentally wounded on the trip.

VICTORIA

ON ARRIVAL at Victoria, the McDougalls saw instead of the expected comfortable home a half-finished house and a large buffalo skin lodge. John and Mr. Woolsey had had a disagreement as to how the mission house should be constructed. Mr. Woolsey's idea was for a large house built in Hudson's Bay style, upright squared timbers at the corners with tenoned logs fitted in ten-foot spans. John's idea was for an ordinary log building, but the older man had overruled.

The early period at Victoria was a succession of pioneer tasks; haymaking, construction of temporary log house and store-house, timbering and manufacture of lumber for a small church. Peter Erasmus, their interpreter of the previous summer, now joined the mission forces as interpreter and general assistant.

Early in September the mission was sufficiently established to allow George McDougall, John and Peter Erasmus to make a missionary journey in search of the Stoney Indians, in fulfilment of the promise McDougall had made the year before. Travelling by way of Edmonton and striking south they reached the Red Deer River, where a near-fatal accident occurred. John's gun was unexpectedly jerked out of his hand by a movement of his horse's head. The gun fell on the stones of the river and discharged, wounding Mr. McDougall in the leg and chest and injuring his horse. Although the wounds were extremely painful and they had no medication with them they were able to move on after two days.

Presently encountering two young Stoney Indians, they learned that the main band of Mountain Stoney was far south and could not be seen on this trip. Mr. McDougall discussed with these two young men where the new mission for the Stoney might be located. One of them suggested "Battle River Lake," the present-day Battle Lake. To explore this possibility, therefore, the missionary party followed the Battle River to its source. En route they stood on the spot where some of Robert Rundle's converts had been slaughtered by their enemies years before. This disaster had caused Benjamin Sinclair to move the mission station from the north shore of Pigeon Lake to the comparative safety of Lac la Biche, over two hundred miles north.

The missionaries now returned to Victoria and made preparations for a buffalo hunt, in preparation for winter. A fishery was organized, two of the party being sent to a lake about forty miles distant, where about 2,000 whitefish were put up for men and dogs. Timbering and lumbering continued for future building. Mr. McDougall meanwhile made periodic trips visiting Hudson's Bay posts and Indian camps.

During this winter of 1863-1864 the Hudson's Bay Company informed the missionaries that the company would no longer be

able to transport supplies into the country for the mission, having enough to do to bring in their own. This was a serious blow to the missions, for it meant that the additional work of freighting would devolve entirely upon their own slender resources. Supplies must be brought in by cart from Fort Garry, a round trip taking from the first of April to the middle of August, enough being brought in at a time for the following 18 months. The first of these trips, after establishment at Victoria, fell upon John in the spring of 1864. This trip was successfully accomplished in fifty-six travelling days. Oxen and carts were procured in Fort Garry. The oxen cost him an average of £7 (about \$35) each; in addition he bought "four quiet milch cows" from \$15 to \$18 each, and a three-year-old colt, a descendant of the famous H.B.C. imported stallion "Fire Away," for £14. Among the other provisions were ten 96-lb. bags of flour, for which he paid £1 14s. each. These were to be shared with the White Fish Lake Mission.

Early in the summer McDougall made a serious beginning at agriculture at the new mission. Seed grain had been brought during the winter from La la Biche, White Fish Lake and Edmonton. A few garden seeds carefully stored by Mrs. McDougall were measured out to the Indians by the thimbleful. So far there was only one plough and an assortment of hoes to do the agriculture and gardening in the settlement. By this time the church and schoolhouse were up, the mission house had been finished and a stockade built around it, and the carpenter Larsen was hard at work making furniture. One or two fields had been fenced and planted, and the garden patches began to give the place the aspect of an established settlement.

During the same summer the elder McDougall, Mr. Steinhaur and Peter Erasmus made a long trip to the upper crossing of the Battle River, meeting about three hundred of the Indians camped at this place. Continuing farther south they went as far as a valley some forty miles north of Morley to see the rest of the Stoneys. Pleased with the country, McDougall promised the Stoneys that "he would do what he could to urge upon the Mission Board the need of establishing a mission" in this vicinity to serve them. Again the party returned to Victoria to make winter preparations. Chief Maskepetoon moved in from the

plains and the McDougalls gave him a room with them in the new house, now completed, "and in every good work he [was] as the missionary's right hand." Meetings were held throughout the week and almost all day on Sunday. Indian councils were attended at which the missionaries pressed the claims of "Christianity and civilization."

A highlight of this period was the receipt from the British and Foreign Bible Society of a number of Cree New Testaments. These were eagerly received by the Crees and Stoneys, and McDougall in writing his thanks to the Bible Society remarked that they were anxiously looking for a consignment of the entire scriptures in Cree.

The winter of 1864-1865 saw the beginning of a new school at Victoria. John McDougall had brought back from Fort Garry the previous summer a Mr. Connor and his son James. Mr. Connor had been a Methodist minister and being then without regular employment had attached himself to John's party for the trip into the Saskatchewan. Mr. Connor was now engaged to teach the school. The original temporary log home became the school room and the pupils were Mrs. Steinhaur's children from White Fish Lake, George McDougall's children and a few orphaned Indian children. Including their own children and foster children, the McDougalls' home alone provided nine scholars for the school.

The provision of food was a constant problem, and one that became more acute when the Hudson's Bay Company established a trading post at Victoria with Mr. George Flett in charge. To help feed so many hungry mouths, the mission engaged a buffalo hunter named "Muddy Bull." He, Peter Erasmus and John were a trio who greatly enjoyed buffalo runs and hunts.

In the spring of 1865 George McDougall and Peter Erasmus accompanied John to White Fish Lake for his marriage to Abigail, daughter of the Rev. and Mrs. H. B. Steinhaur. The couple had known each other since John's first visit to the Saskatchewan in 1862. All parents willingly gave their consent and George McDougall performed the ceremony. The "honeymoon trip" by dog train from White Fish Lake to Victoria was difficult, however, due to the spring break-up.

WOODVILLE

GEORGE MCDougALL had an immediate plan for his son, the re-establishment of the old Rundle-Sinclair mission to the Stoney at the north end of Pigeon Lake. About the first of December, 1864, he had sent John with an assistant named Oliver to begin preparations, and John had returned to the site in March to take in provisions and a plough against the start of work in the spring. Although so far no missionary grant was provided for the opening of this new work, George McDougall had great confidence in his son, and the new mission began as a venture of faith.

The newlyweds started off for Pigeon Lake with the parents' blessing, a pair of four-point Hudson's Bay blankets, ammunition, some net twine and five bushels of seed potatoes. John also took some eight or ten horses of his own and two oxen and carts borrowed from his father. The others in the party were Oliver and a young Indian named Paul and his wife. It was an eventful trip. Beyond Edmonton there was no cart trail, and the period of spring breakup made travelling difficult. Their progress was also hindered because they had to supplement the buffalo meat and pemmican they carried by hunting ducks, geese, chickens and rabbits.

John had previously estimated that in the absence of roads they would be able to take their carts no closer than twenty-five miles from the new site. Arriving at this limit they stopped for the Sabbath, and then were forced to "lie low" while a late winter snowstorm raged through Monday and Tuesday. Wednesday they had expected to push on, only to discover that John's young bride and Paul's wife had broken out with measles, presently to be joined by Oliver. Here they remained nearly a week longer, their only "primitive physic" being soup liberally seasoned with cayenne pepper.

When they had transferred all their goods to their animals, a further two days of painful travel brought them to the Pigeon Lake site where, nearly twenty years before, Benjamin Sinclair had begun under the Rev. Robert Rundle the first Protestant mission in the entire territory. Here, the heavily wooded land sloped gently to the lake's edge, and the never-failing spring

provided clear water. Soon the party erected the first primitive house, using the logs prepared earlier, and after one unsuccessful attempt, built a chimney. Soon the Indians began to appear, some convalescing from the measles, of which there had been a widespread epidemic. Then began a repetition of the early days at the Victoria station, with the young lay missionary's time divided between hunting, building, fishing, ploughing, fencing, instructing the Indians in agriculture, and religious meetings. Interesting and varied, indeed, were the Indians who came, ranging from old conjurers to Christian or semi-Christian Stoneys. Among a camp of Crees came Samson, who later became successor to Maskepetoon as chief of the Crees. Another visitor was Paul Chian, a French mixed-blood, who before his conversion had been a noted gambler and warrior, and who later became a class leader and a local preacher. So began in real earnest the Woodville mission station, named in honour of the Rev. Enoch Wood, General Superintendent of Missions.

In the summer of 1865 the Rev. George McDougall took the long trail back to Fort Garry for supplies, having made a previous arrangement to meet his children David and Eliza, whom they had left in school in Ontario in 1860. John and Mr. Steinhaur visited Victoria, to find the senior Mrs. McDougall anxious because of the restlessness of the Indians around them. Many deaths had occurred amongst the Indians during the epidemic, and tribal warfare still continued. The son's arrival must have provided a welcome relief.

During that summer also the Victoria station was encouraged by the arrival of a colony of some twenty-five or thirty families of English mixed-bloods, who had migrated from the Red River country to take up settlement with them. They took river lots to the east of the mission. In August, when the father returned with David and Eliza, there was a happy reunion. All remarked on the differences that five years in school had made, and John was pleased that his brother and sister accepted his wife Abigail without strangeness.

The early days at Woodville station were a rigorous apprenticeship for John. He remarked, "What our ministrations lacked in quality, they fully made up in quantity," meetings being held

twice daily on week days and nearly all day Sunday. The missionary's activities covered a wide range: judge and arbiter over old quarrels, domestic and tribal; physician and surgeon; preacher and teacher. New groups of Indians continually came to the mission, some of them inveterate gamblers and many of them polygamists. It was a time for patience and persistence in combating old superstitions, and John recognized that "the implantings of centuries cannot be shaken off in one or two generations." Meanwhile, he was gaining increasing fluency in the Cree language.

In the early winter of 1865-1866 John and his wife took a trip to White Fish Lake to visit her parents and people. Here he acquired further insight into the language and life of the native people, living among them and learning from his veteran missionary father-in-law, the Rev. Mr. Steinhaur, whom he called an "ideal missionary." Later in the winter, John and his wife moved on to Victoria Station and wintered there. In February, 1866, their first child, Flora, was born at the mission house, with Mrs. McDougall Sr., attending at the birth.

About the middle of December, father and son had spent a Sunday at Fort Edmonton, where arrangements were made to visit the Rocky Mountain House immediately after New Year's to meet the Mountain Stoney who were expected there, and to perform the marriage of Mr. McAuley, a Hudson's Bay man, to Miss Brazeau, daughter of the second officer in charge. In the early months of 1866 the old pattern of itineration amongst the Indian camps, so long a feature of missionary work in the west at this time, was maintained. Everywhere the purpose was "Christianizing and civilizing," religious meetings alternating with informal lectures on civilization and education.

Meanwhile, preparations for another agricultural season were going forward. Seed wheat was bought from the Roman Catholic priest at Lac la Biche for 10c. a lb., three chickens (two hens and a cock) were bought from the Roman Catholic Mission at St. Albert for 8s. (about \$2.00) each. Again just as spring was coming in John, his wife and baby, an "elderly" widow and her boy of some seven or eight years, and a young Indian named Mark returned to the Woodville mission.

The summer was busy as usual. Once again supplies for the missions had to be brought in. This time the Hudson's Bay Company agreed to bring them as far as Fort Carlton, and John made the trip to fetch them. Later George McDougall's eldest daughter, Eliza, was married to Richard Hardisty, who was at this time in charge of the Rocky Mountain House post. John and his party, accompanied by Francis Whitford, an English mixed-blood and a good builder, returned to Woodville late in September. Although no reports from Victoria or Woodville seem to have reached the Society in Toronto at this time, John McDougall was now listed for the first time as "received on trial" and his station given as "Edmonton House, Rocky Mountains."

The winter of 1866-1867 was a time of near-starvation all over the Saskatchewan country. The buffalo were far south on the plains and the crops were still insufficient to sustain the missions. At the Victoria mission all that could be offered for food was potatoes and milk. At the invitation of Mr. Hardisty, therefore, John and Francis Whitford visited Rocky Mountain House, where provisions were in better supply.

The following summer John and his Mountain and Wood Stoneys went far out on the plains to hunt buffalo. It was difficult to persuade these Indians to venture into this unfamiliar terrain, but the hunt was successful. Returning after twenty-six days on the prairies they found the elder McDougall and Jim Connor searching for them near Woodville. The Victoria mission had heard rumours that they had been killed during Indian fighting. The father brought news that he planned to start for Ontario, taking his three daughters to school. He was asking John and Mr. Steinhaur to visit the Victoria mission as often as practicable during his absence. John accompanied his father back to Victoria, saw him, his three sisters, and the daughter of Mr. Tate, the Hudson's Bay factor, off for the east. An additional reason for the trip was to lay upon the church in person the necessity for sending additional missionaries to the Saskatchewan: "We are so far off, that the written cry for help loses its emphasis before it reaches its destination."

The annual report of the Missionary Society for 1866-1867 contains the first report George McDougall had submitted for several years, a review of his work in the Northwest to that date. He is depressed when he thinks of the insufficient means at their disposal for meeting the opportunities presented for missionary work, grateful for the unity in spirit experienced among the scattered missions. He is thankful to God that their lives had been spared in a lawless country. He notes the great good that has resulted from the Crees and Stoneys receiving the Bible and new hymn books and catechisms in their own language, and the advance resulting from the mission schools teaching the children and adults to read and sing. A moral and spiritual advance is being shown by many Indians. Some of the chiefs have become Christian and one has become an assistant to the missionary. Polygamy has been abandoned by many, and "some are truly devoted to the Lord." He notes that at Victoria there are now one hundred "half-castes," the majority of whom have made a Christian profession, and thirty of their children are in school. "But our chief cause of rejoicing is the Mountain Stoneys. Amongst these the gospel has gloriously triumphed. These once implacable, unmerciful savages, have been changed into a peace-loving people, the true friends of the white man." He reports severe destitution in the Saskatchewan. Many have died from starvation, including Joseph Kechiass, the oldest of the local preachers. Another cause of concern is the influx of miners pouring into the Saskatchewan from the Cariboo, many of them wintering at the missions. He expects an increase of at least one hundred in his church membership, when all returns are in.

The pressing needs of the work weigh heavily upon him:

Over the greater part of this country the devil holds undisputed sway; he has assimilated the hearts of this people into his own likeness. Two of our Stoneys were murdered last week. I buried a murdered white man a short time ago. As yet we have been saved through the mercy of God. A change is at hand, the Miners by hundreds are coming amongst us, and they will avenge themselves on the Blackfeet. May we receive help to stand between the Christian Cree and Stoney, and the white man, until order can be effected.

At Woodville John tried to compensate for the lack of buffalo meat by emphasizing fishing, introducing fishing by net to the Indians, among whom it was previously unknown. During his father's absence he made several trips to Victoria station, on one of them taking his family to White Fish Lake by dog train. About the middle of May a buffalo hunt to the open plains was organized consisting of about forty lodges of Indians and including seven distinct classes of men. These were: Mountain and Wood Stoney, Plain and Wood Cree, French mixed-bloods and English mixed-bloods, John himself being the only white man. Each was distinguished from the other by previous environment, language and dialect, and the missionary task was to keep them all living together peacefully though their history was against it. After six weeks of successful hunting they returned to Woodville, and the next weeks were occupied in chopping a trail through the virgin forest to give carts access to the mission.

REINFORCEMENTS

WHEN SEPTEMBER CAME the arrangement was for John to go down the Saskatchewan to meet his father returning from the east. Leaving his family at Victoria and taking two Indian boys, three carts and some loose horses, he set off, expecting to meet the returning party between Forts Carlton and Pitt. When father and son finally met, they greeted each other with open arms. George McDougall's plea in the east for reinforcements had been eminently successful; he brought with him the Rev. Peter Campbell and family and two Snyder brothers as teachers. The Rev. George Young had been appointed to the Red River and Rev. Egerton R. Young to Norway House.

The General Committee, meeting in the fall of 1867, had unanimously endorsed the inauguration of two new missions, one to the settlers at Red River, the other to the Blackfoot Indians near the Rocky Mountains. The appointments had been made, and the valedictory services held on Thursday evening, May 7, 1868, in the Richmond Street Wesleyan Church, Toronto, had sent the new missionaries forth on a great wave of enthusiasm. By 7 o'clock, the hour of service, the large building was crowded

to capacity. On the platform were the Rev. James Elliott, President of the Conference; the executives of the Missionary Society, the Revs. W. Morley Punshon, Enoch Wood and Lachlin Taylor; other prominent dignitaries and the departing missionaries. Following the addresses, when Dr. Taylor called for the collection, pressing the claims of the work "in his own inimitable way," the congregation responded with a collection of about \$180.00, a large sum at the time. On one of the plates was a piece of paper folded around a \$20 gold piece, and the notation "For the mission to the Blackfeet Indians from a great debtor to grace. Alleluia!" A breakfast meeting was held the following morning at which more farewell addresses were given and greetings were brought by the Presbyterians, the Baptists, the Methodist New Connection, the Congregationalists and prominent laymen. Plainly a new turning point had been reached in the expansion of the Methodist missions in the west.

By the time they had reached the upper Saskatchewan some of the high enthusiasm of the Richmond Street meetings had worn off. The father told the son:

I'm tired of the long journey, and of handling tenderfeet, and I purpose to start bright and early Monday morning for home, leaving the whole company and outfit to your care for the rest of the trip. When I leave you. . . I will not take a reef in my rigging until with the blessing of heaven, I reach Victoria.¹

John records that among the tenderfeet there were wide variations of opinion about the country, ranging from "Surely this is God's country" to "Oh why did I ever come out here into this God-forsaken and beastly land?" Certainly such a journey was not without its hazards, even for the most seasoned traveller. Peter Campbell's report of it was eloquent in its brevity:

I drove my two oxen and carts seven hundred miles over the plains, and walked most of the way. Mrs. Campbell drove the horse and buggy and took care of our two little girls most of the way from Red River—sometimes in a river swift enough to carry us off our feet, or plunging through bogs in which oxen and cart were well-nigh buried. We reached Edmonton September 21—four months and a half on the way.²

John McDougall claims that this trip of 1868 marked the entry of the first buckboards into Manitoba and the Northwest, the beginning of the end of the day of the Red River cart.

NEW BEGINNINGS IN FORT EDMONTON

WITH ADDITIONAL missionary strength now in the country, the plan was for the Rev. Peter Campbell, his wife and children, to be stationed at Fort Edmonton and his brother-in-law, Mr. A. J. Snyder, to inaugurate a school there. Mr. Campbell seems to have had a good impression of John McDougall on their first meeting. When they reached Victoria on their westward trip, Mr. Campbell preached in the mission church, interpreted by John. Mr. Campbell's comment was: "As an Indian missionary, he is a power, being perfectly acquainted with the language and habits of many tribes, and having an acquaintance with some of the Blackfoot chiefs. I expect to hear great things from him."³ Looking forward to his own work at Fort Edmonton, Campbell wrote to the Missionary Society:

Your missionary will do his best to erect a house of prayer at Fort Edmonton. The papists are alive to the importance of church building. It is really surprising to witness their efforts in this country. Priests and nuns are located at almost every important point. May anti-Christ fall before the power of Christ.³

John McDougall described Edmonton in 1868 as follows:

This is a prominent place; has been on the map of Britain's empire for scores of years, has been a "station" in the Minutes of a large Conference for a long time. Are there any hotels? None. Are there any churches? One, a Roman Catholic. How many stores? One, the Hudson's Bay Company. What is the population? From twenty to one hundred and fifty. . . . Edmonton as she really is, stands for the centredom of the great Saskatchewan country—the centre in religion, government, commerce, transport. Within the four walls of yonder little fort, and within its wooden bastions and picket sides, large business is conducted and far-reaching measures are planned.⁴

By January 8, in a letter written to the Society in Toronto, Mr. Campbell could report encouraging beginnings. The

Sunday services were being well attended, and public prayers were held each evening in his own home. The future site of the Methodist church had been selected, "quite near enough to accommodate the people at the Fort, and [it] commands a magnificent view of the river and adjacent country." Mr. Snyder had begun his day-school, and to meet the demand for adult education, an evening school had been opened also. "All our efforts thus far have been successful."

At the same time John McDougall took up the work again at the Woodville station. His premises so far were extremely modest: a one-roomed shanty and another like it for a manse. The manse he described as "kitchen, dining-room, and sleeping compartment. In it we have held many public services, councils, and entertained various guests—Hudson's Bay officials, wandering missionaries, and vagrant Indians, horse thieves and war parties have slept with us for the night." The first task for the fall was to add another room to the house, and sawing lumber for the floor of this and the usual hunting, fishing and pastoral visiting fully occupied the time. There were usually about half a hundred Indians camped around the mission, "a motley crew, a strange history and tradition, murderers, and poisoners, and horse thieves, conjurers and medicine men, gamblers and warriors, skillful hunters and settlers." In strong contrast to the pagan Indians were such men as Samson, who was making a strong effort in the transition from old ways to new.

By January, 1869, he could report:

The Stoney's make religion a business; in their camp morning and evening prayers are attended by all, and hymns of praise are sung with a pathos and energy that I have never witnessed among any other natives. We are now engaged in the erection of a snug little church, but difficulties attend every movement—the lumber I have to saw by hand and material of every kind is hard to be procured.⁵

It was another hard winter, the weather being severe, the snow light and the buffalo too far away to be reached. The Indians dispersed, and being alone John and his family were free to go to Fort Edmonton for the Christmas holidays. John records that he thinks this was the occasion when he was requested to

preach in English by the Rev. Peter Campbell, and had the humiliating experience of finding himself at a loss in his own tongue, and obliged to sit down. Mr. Campbell came to his rescue and the congregation, chiefly Hudson's Bay post servants, sympathized with his predicament. John acquired a fine train of sleigh dogs, and a dozen dog trains swung off down the ice of the Saskatchewan River, bound for Victoria mission for the New Year's holiday. It must have been a merry sight and, with all in good humour and anxious to make fast time, the trip was quickly completed.

In the Methodist mission establishments the New Year received more attention and celebration than did Christmas. An outstanding feature was the watchnight service held on New Year's Eve. New Year's Day was given to a general feast followed by outdoor sports, football, foot races, tugs-of-war and dog-train races. The second day of January found the crowd dispersed.

It was February before there was enough snow to allow winter travel in the country. With a party of Hudson's Bay men, John took the opportunity of visiting Rocky Mountain House, considered to be a part of his Woodville parish. It was only his third sight of the Rocky Mountains, as he seldom had occasion to travel that far west. He held two services in the post on Sunday with English, Scotch, French, mixed-bloods, Cree, Stoney, Blackfoot, Protestant, Roman Catholic and pagan being present. John spoke in Cree, which was the *lingua franca* of the place.

A District meeting was held at Victoria early in April attended by the total missionary force with John present as a probationer. Here occurred one of the great crises of John's life. On his way to the meeting Chief Factor William Christie of the Edmonton Hudson's Bay Company post strongly appealed to John to leave the church and enter the employ of the Company. He offered to put him in charge of the Mountain Fort at a chief clerk's salary. He recognized John's great gifts in dealing with the Indians and argued that up until this time the Methodist Church had accorded John no official missionary status. John felt the force of this argument and considered that his recommendation by a District meeting of 1864, following four years of "constant mission work," had been delayed unduly. In 1869 his case was

still pending. We can only conjecture what the reason for this delay was, but it would seem likely that the remoteness of the station and lack of regular communication, with the additional handicap of John's lack of formal academic training for the ministry, made the church fathers hesitate. His brother-in-law, Richard Hardisty, added his word to the Chief Factor's to try to persuade John to enter the Company's service. "John, the Methodist Church does not want you. . . ." The offer took him by surprise and he was greatly tempted by it. At District meeting John offered his resignation but it was vigorously declined by the Rev. P. Campbell, and though his father said nothing, John was well aware of what he thought. In true Methodist fashion the ministers spent the morning in prayer, while John wrestled with his problem. It ended with John making a reconsecration of his life and experiencing a new gift of grace. When he announced his decision to stand by the church the group sang the Doxology.

FOUNDATIONS OF EDUCATION IN THE WEST

IT HAS BEEN correctly stated that the beginnings of the public system of education, in the Canadian West as elsewhere, lay with the Christian church, both Protestant and Roman Catholic. The reasons why Christian missionaries should have interested themselves in the education of native people may not always be understood. The Mission school was regarded not as an appendage or a sideline to the evangelistic effort but as a strict necessity. "A mission without a school is an anomaly."

The Rev. James Evans, almost as soon as he arrived at his new mission station at Norway House on July 26, 1840, addressed himself to the problem of reducing to written form the unwritten Cree language, and invented his system of syllabics. Eagerly did the children of the forest learn to read their own "birch-bark talk." Evans tutored Rundle, and so the powerful invention of this newly written language travelled into the Saskatchewan country. Rundle was not long in teaching it to the wandering tribes, wherever their teepees were pitched. It became a powerful means of evangelism when the British and Foreign Bible

Society was able to place in the missionaries' hands the scriptures in whole or in part.

A major victory accomplished largely through the gift of reading was the conversion of the Cree chief Maskepetoon whom Mr. Rundle taught to read at the age of thirty-five in the syllabic characters. Now able to read, the only literature available to him in his own language was the Cree New Testament, and, said the Rev. G. McDougall, "he read it through and through. He carried his Bible in his bosom, and when attacked by the priest or the sorcerer, he invariably met their sophistries by asking, 'What does the book say?'" Indeed, the Indians regarded reading and writing with veneration, if not superstition. When Maskepetoon was murdered by the Blackfeet his assassins were afraid of his Bible and made haste to get it out of their camp and send it to Mr. McDougall as quickly as possible.

Thus, education in the Saskatchewan antedated the McDougalls, for on their visit of inspection from Norway House in 1862 they found at Henry Steinhaur's flourishing mission at White Fish Lake a school, housed in its own building, though it was even then suffering the lack of a full-time teacher.

It has been noted above how a small school was established at the Victoria mission soon after the McDougalls arrived in 1863. Mr. Connor, later tragically drowned, was one of its early teachers. At first the school was housed in the original temporary log dwelling put up to house the McDougall family. The first pupils were the McDougall children, the Steinhaur children from White Fish Lake, "and a few orphan Indian children."⁶

At White Fish Lake, even in the absence of a teacher, the Rev. Henry Steinhaur could report in 1866-1867: "Almost all our people can read the Scriptures in their own language. This is a great blessing."⁷ But at the same time a committee of six of his native people was petitioning the Missionary Society to send them a full-time teacher, reminding the Society that they had been making such appeals since 1861. The Society viewed the request favourably, and hoped that friends of missions would

make sufficient contributions to enable them to send one. This was evidently a "contingent" project of the time.

It has been noted above that among the missionary reinforcements brought into the Saskatchewan from the east in 1868 were the Rev. Peter Campbell and his brother-in-law, Mr. A. J. Snyder, a teacher, both stationed in Fort Edmonton. Mr. Snyder got his day school under way that fall of 1868, and reported an early start at adult education: "To meet the wants of the men, we found it necessary to have an evening-school also." At the end of that winter, on the 9th of May, 1869, he left Fort Edmonton accompanying Peter Campbell and John McDougall to the great gathering on the plains, joining the main camp on May 28. His description of a primitive school under the open skies is at once vivid and enlightening. "I was now to enter on active duties twice each day—a suitable spot was selected, and the hand-bell rung and the little folks collected for school exercises; and then the mixed multitude of Stoneys, Crees, and half-breeds, frequently numbering 140, attired in the wildest costumes, surrounded the teacher, and the fruits of our prairie school were very encouraging, for before we had completed our nine weeks' journey, many of the children could sing quite a number of Sabbath-School hymns, repeat the Commandments and the Lord's Prayer, and answer a number of scripture questions."⁸

That fall he moved from Fort Edmonton, where his school had about twenty pupils, to White Fish Lake, where the school numbered eighty, to fill the long felt need for a teacher there. It was the beginning of three years of able and successful work at the White Fish school. About it Mr. Snyder wrote:

Much had been done by Brother Steinhaur towards enlightening and elevating the minds of the senior members of the Mission; but alas! the youthful mind was neglected . . . and it was with difficulty that anything could be done, as I could not speak Cree, and my pupils did not understand English. Soon, however, this difficulty was overcome, for by close application I soon learned to speak a few words of Cree, and the scholars began to pick up the English—and what was the consequence? When three years had passed away I looked over the school-roll and found that 120 children had been taught to read the Holy Scriptures and to sing many of the sweet songs of Zion!⁹

His school at the end of December, 1869, had eighty pupils of whom "at least twenty-five can read the New Testament." The day schools, with their strong emphasis on the Bible and on the learning and singing of hymns, would have seemed to modern eyes in part an extension of the Sabbath school. Of the latter, Mr. Snyder says: "The Sabbath School is doing a good work. In the five months past 1,550 verses have been recited . . . send us some Bibles and school books."⁸

In February, 1871, during Mr. Snyder's tenure as teacher at White Fish Lake, Chief Factor William J. Christie of Fort Edmonton, with a delegation of Hudson's Bay men and the missionary staff of Victoria Mission, paid a friendly visit to the station at White Fish. Lectures and addresses were given including one by Mr. Christie on "Government and Christianity," interpreted into Cree by John McDougall. With the visitors acting as inspectors, Mr. Snyder gave the children a day-long examination in reading, writing, spelling, geography and Bible history. At this time the average attendance at school was forty-five. Thirty could read in the New Testament and the rest were beginners. Two years before, said Mr. Steinhaur, these children who "were altogether unacquainted with any one word of the English language, can now read, write, and cipher with such alacrity . . . and I must say, that our school-master deserves highly to be commended for the deep interest he takes in teaching the poor children. He is just the right man in the right place, having to contend with difficulties unknown to those who have never been placed in such a position."

The school at Victoria mission was similar. In April, 1870, George McDougall wrote: "We are favoured by the best of school teachers. Here are at least 100 children." He drew a vivid contrast between the unschooled children of pagan parents and those in the mission school: "There are few pieces in the *Sunday School Harp* that these little ones cannot sing."¹⁰

By May, 1870, George McDougall could report that most of the one hundred and thirty English mixed-bloods and of the Crees who lived in the Victoria settlement could read the English Bible and understand the language. In the work of education we have received valuable assistance from a native of the country,

Mr. B. McKenzie, who was educated by the good Bishop Anderson, was converted at Victoria and now devoutly labours for the moral and spiritual elevation of his people."¹¹

Victoria mission also had its evening classes for adult education as reported by George McDougall:

We have also a week-night reading class. Our plan is a very simple one, but it has proved a great success. Some six or eight are called upon to read pieces each evening. They are allowed to select their own reading, with the understanding that nothing immoral or fictitious will be introduced. So far we have had to admire the good taste displayed. Great effort has been made to acquire a thorough knowledge of the reading; and the different tastes have given us quite a variety. Christian biography, temperance, history, and dialogue, all pass between us. In fact, so profitable have been these exercises, that we intend to introduce them among the natives, training those who understand the syllabic characters to interest their people with portions of the Bible.¹²

When George McDougall and his family moved to Edmonton in 1871, the day school was resumed by Mrs. McDougall and one of their daughters. Mr. McDougall, as Chairman of the District, in a letter written May 20, 1872, pleaded with the Society for funds to establish a school at the Woodville mission:

150 children demand immediate attention; a mission without a school is an anomaly; if the stability of a house depends on the security of its foundation, equally so does the future of a mission depend on its school; if Rundle had not taught his converts to read the syllabic characters, they would have returned to paganism long ago . . . we must have an efficient school-master at Woodville, nothing attaches the native to our stations like attention to his children.¹³

At New Year's, 1875, John McDougall was advised that a grant of \$500 had been made for a school at the new Morleyville mission in the south. He engaged Dr. George Verey¹⁴ as school teacher, and as soon as a log schoolhouse had been erected the new teacher set to work. "In three or four days we had the first school in all this country south of Edmonton in fair running order." A year later John reported that the school had been a success, and "though we cannot report quite the average

attendance required by Government to obtain their grant, yet we are very much encouraged, and hope soon to be able to have larger school-room and more numerous attendance."

In 1875 an intrepid school mistress, Miss E. A. Barrett from Ontario, came with the Rev. L. Warner across the plains. Her coming as teacher to White Fish Lake coincided with the return of the Rev. Henry Steinhaur, who had been stationed at Woodville for two years. Mr. Steinhaur was delighted with her work, for she not only taught the school but taught the women home-making and child care. Of her he said, "We cannot be sufficiently thankful to the missionary society for their manifest kindness in sending us such a one as Miss Barrett to teach our children, and our elder people, things which will tend to promote our civilization." Also in 1875 George McDougall brought Mr. Andrew Sibbald and his family back with him from Ontario to be schoolmaster at Morley.

The Rev. Henry Steinhaur aptly summed up the missionary motivation in their educational work:

We speak of our Missions in this country as being a power for renovating the condition of those people who have come under their instructions; and in my estimation the school has been an equal power in elevating in the scale of being those who in the estimation of many a white man, were irrecoverably barbarous—too degraded to acquire knowledge, either moral or religious.

His tribute to his school-master, Mr. A. J. Snyder, might have been applied to any of the self-sacrificing teachers in the mission schools:

His work has truly been a work of faith and labour of love, and displayed patience in the hope of advancing the children committed to his charge in the ways of religion and truth. The felt responsibility that has been the motive-cause of his success in carrying on the school—was his religious belief in the value of the human soul . . . his dependence was upon the grace of God, without whose blessing no work is good, or strong, or holy; hence the blessing of God has appeared and prospered the work of his hands.¹⁵

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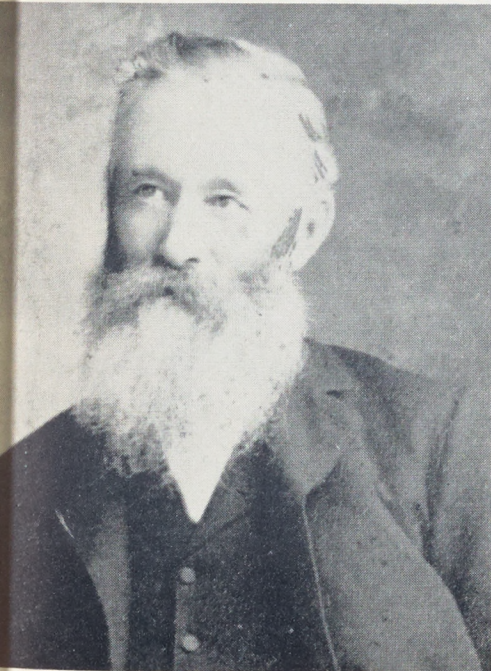
- ¹J. McDougall, *Pathfinding on Plain and Prairie*, p. 270.
- ²Sanderson, *The First Century of Methodism in Canada*, Vol. II, p. 233.
- ³*Missionary Notices*, series 2, p. 39; letter from Rev. P. Campbell dated Victoria, Saskatchewan, May 1, 1869.
- ⁴*In the Days of the Red River Rebellion*, pp. 15, 16.
- ⁵*Missionary Notices*, series 2; letter dated January, 1869.
- ⁶J. McDougall, *Saddle, Sled and Snowshoe*, p. 229. Orphaned Indian children were a constant problem. On March 1, 1871, George McDougall wrote (*Missionary Notices*, series 2, p. 179): "Poor children—outcasts. We have always had more or less—sometimes eight or ten; at present we have only six. You cannot turn them away from your door."
- ⁷*Annual Report*, 1866-1867, pp. xv-xvii.
- ⁸*Missionary Notices*, series 2, p. 108; letter dated White Fish Lake, Dec. 30, 1869.
- ⁹*Ibid.*, p. 331; letter from Fort Benton, Missouri River, Sept. 24, 1873.
- ¹⁰*Ibid.*, p. 125; letter dated Victoria, April 5, 1870.
- ¹¹*Ibid.*, p. 104.
- ¹²*Ibid.*, p. 180.
- ¹³*Ibid.*, p. 248.
- ¹⁴The *Edmonton Bulletin*, Nov. 26, 1881, carried the obituary of Dr. Verey. He was a member of the Royal College of Surgeons, England, practised medicine in Australia, served as a military physician in the China War, in the U.S. Service at Benton, Montana, as Medical Officer and Signal Observer. In 1873 he was employed as Clerk in H.B.C. Fort Edmonton; then went to Morley for a year as teacher; returning to Edmonton he married, taught school, farmed, was Justice of the Peace for the Territories and Clerk of the Edmonton sitting of the Saskatchewan District Court as well as continuing to practice medicine. He had a craving for alcohol which he tried to overcome, and was subject to deep depression which finally incapacitated him and he died of an overdose of chloral.
- ¹⁵*Missionary Notices*, series 2, p. 250.

4

Peacemaking among the Indians, 1869-1871

AN ENTIRELY NEW VENTURE was being planned for the west, a monster gathering of Indian tribes on the plains in the summer of 1869, sponsored by the missionaries and the Hudson's Bay Company. Henry Steinhaur was to come with his people from White Fish Lake, others from Lac la Biche, George McDougall and the Hudson's Bay officers and settlers from Victoria, Maskepetoon and his Wood Crees from their camp, John with as many Crees and Mountain and Wood Stoneys as could be mustered, and the Rev. Peter Campbell and the mission teacher from Edmonton. The object of the meeting was "protection and the cultivating by lectures and sermons and personal intercourse of education and loyalty and Christianity": "protection," because it was becoming increasingly dangerous to venture into the Blackfoot country and there was some safety in numbers; "lecturing and preaching" for education and evangelization; and "personal intercourse" to forward friendly relations amongst differing tribes formerly enemies.

Before this gathering could be held many objections to it had to be overcome. It was during these critical months of March and April, 1869, that the tragic blow of the murder of Maskepetoon by the Blackfeet took place. Under date of May 1, 1869, George McDougall reported the occurrence to his superiors.



MRS. GEORGE McDOUGALL

REV. JOHN McDOUGALL

REV. GEORGE MILLWARD McDOUGALL

MRS. JOHN McDOUGALL



Left: TWO GENERATIONS OF ORDAINED INDIAN MINISTERS.

Rev. Henry B. Steinhaur (seated left) and his two sons, Rev. Robert B. Steinhaur and Rev. Egerton R. Steinhaur.

"Our noble old Chief Mas-ke-pe-toon, and most of his family, have been killed by the Blackfeet. The Old Chief, who has ever been a peace-maker, started about two weeks ago for the Blackfeet camp, hoping to arrange for a peace among the tribes. He was approaching a camp, bearing the white flag with one hand, and carrying his Bible with the other, when a blood-thirsty Blackfoot, called the Swan, rushed upon him and then the work of death began; seven of our own Crees were literally cut to pieces. The death of our old Chief is regarded by both Whites and Indians as a national loss. . . . I cannot tell you how deeply my own mind is afflicted. The poor Crees are paralyzed."¹ It was thought that this sad misfortune would likely break up the contemplated gathering on the plains, but they went forward with the preparations hopefully.

Following Maskepetoon's murder, revenge was in the air and travel more hazardous. In the middle of May John's contingent of Wood Crees, Mountain and Wood Stoneys, and mixed-bloods started for the gathering on the plains. John left his group and went to Edmonton to accompany Mr. Campbell and Mr. Snyder, later rejoining his own party. All foraged for food as they went. John's Indians, unused to the treeless plains, showed signs of discontent, and it was a relief to the young missionary when finally they met the elder McDougall's contingent. These nomads in their rootlessness reminded John of patriarchal times, of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob with their flocks and herds, except that these North American nomads were still more primitive in that their flocks and herds were wild.

The camp was a unique gathering of many racial strains, including all the Wesleyan Methodist establishments in the area, the school teachers and even one Roman Catholic, the Rev. Fr. Scollen, an Irishman. Camp law and government was set up after the old pattern, but the missionaries were hard put to keep the peace amongst those previously unused to being in close proximity to one another. The Blackfeet also camped on the plain within a short ride of the Crees, and the total number was estimated at more than 10,000. The missionaries communicated with both, but it is not clear whether the enemy Crees and Blackfeet actually met together. Every day had its quota of worship,

preaching, meetings held for "Christianizing, educating, and civilizing." Buffalo hunting was steadily engaged in to provide for the large crowd. This gathering was a daring innovation in the lives of these primitive people, and in view of the recent loss of Maskepetoon and the increase of Indian unrest and tribal warfare, probably a dangerous one at this time. When the gathering finally broke up, John concluded that it had done good. The rival factions had been brought together out of their isolation; the preaching and praying and lecturing had been seed sown which would ultimately bring its own fruition.

At the end of the summer a change took place, with Mr. Campbell and family moving to Woodville, and John and his family to Victoria. Fort Edmonton was without a minister once again. The reason given for the change was the increase of work necessary amongst the Plains Crees, who were increasingly restless. A secondary reason may well have been the impending birth of John and Abigail McDougall's child, and the natural desire of the young couple to be near their own family at this time. At Victoria farm work engaged them for the fall period, and John and his father accompanied the Indians on another buffalo hunt. John took his family over to White Fish Lake, and here their third daughter, named Augusta, or "Gussie" by Grandfather Steinhaur, was born.

Now the tempo of tribal warfare steadily mounted. By January the elder McDougall reported that the Crees had killed about one hundred Blackfeet since the death of Maskepetoon. The Blackfeet were now threatening retaliation. The missionaries felt themselves under constant threat. "Nothing," wrote George McDougall, "but an ardent love for souls and a strong trust in God's mighty power, not only to save but to restrain, will carry us through these times." A divine urgency possessed him as he painted for his eastern confreres a vivid contrast between the pagan natives, embroiled in tribal war, murder, gambling and polygamy, and the Christian converts. "If civil law and gospel light are not speedily brought to the rescue of these tribes, they will perish from the earth."²

To add to the restlessness, in the interregnum between the transfer of Rupert's Land from the Hudson's Bay Company to

the Dominion of Canada in 1868 and the coming of the North West Mounted Police in 1874, there was an invasion of American "free traders," bringing in raw whisky in their trade with the Indians. This free trading, especially by a lawless group called "wolfers," had as its accompaniment acts of lawlessness and violence. These baleful influences led the elder McDougall and his people to address to the Lieutenant-Governor of the North-West Territories a petition asking that this illegal traffic be stopped. John McDougall was asked to carry this petition to the scattered Indian camps to obtain the signatures of the chiefs and leading men. Lieutenant-Governor Adams G. Archibald responded with a proclamation enacting total prohibition of the sale of intoxicants in the Northwest.

Indian unrest and discontent was daily becoming more apparent. The Hudson's Bay post at Rocky Mountain House was now unsafe to visit because of the lawless conduct of the Blackfeet who traded there. The Blackfoot temper was being aggravated by the entry of the American freetraders into their country, and a Blackfoot chief told John that they intended to wage war against the Americans though they were all killed in doing it. Neither was he entirely favourable toward the English because they harboured Blackfeet enemies (transient American miners) at their missions. The chief would, however, be favourable to having his camp visited by missionaries.

THE PETITION FOR AN EARLY TREATY WITH THE INDIANS

THE WESLEYAN MISSIONARIES all continually urged in letters to their home office that everything possible should be done to effect an early treaty settlement with the Indians. On January 9, 1870, the Rev. George McDougall wrote underlining the importance of an immediate settlement with the Plains tribes. He recalled that six years earlier the sight of a white man was a cause of rejoicing among the Crees, but that now, with the rapid decrease of the vital buffalo food supply, the opposite was the case. The winters of 1867 and 1868 had been times of starvation, and the whites were being blamed. Rumours were rife that the Hudson's Bay Company was no longer "the highest representative of the Great

Queen," and that the Company had received a large sum from the government for its lands. McDougall commented, "The Indian is not so ignorant but to inquire to whom has he ever ceded his hunting grounds."² The Blackfeet were enraged at attempted immigration into their country from the United States. The wily old Blackfoot chief, Old Sun, had massacred some immigrants coming from Montana to Fort Edmonton, near present-day Pincher Creek. Near Morley, in 1868, a company of German immigrants coming from Montana were murdered and not one left to tell the tale.

As the missionaries moved about amongst the Plains tribes the element of danger was always present, their personal safety hanging on being recognized by the Indians as men of peace and not of war. When their identity had been established their release was usually speedy. With the exception of two Oblate missionaries who were killed during the Rebellion of 1885, it would appear that no Christian missionaries were ever killed by Indians in the Canadian west. The Blackfeet reserved their deepest enmity for Americans, as was brought out by Mr. Colin Fraser, famous as Sir George Simpson's piper who was visited by the tourists Milton and Cheadle at Lac Ste. Anne in 1862.

Mr. Fraser said the Blackfeet were much belied. In his experience of 38 years in this country never knew an Englishman injured by them. Several Americans killed. Had spent a summer hunting with the Piegans & was treated like a prince. Once when out with Mr. Rowand, as they were resting in the middle of the day, a body of 200 Blackfeet naked & in warpaint, moved on to them with fearful yells. Mr. Rowand jumped & cried out "Stop you villains"; one of the chiefs fortunately recognized him & stopped the rest. They were profuse in their apologies & regrets for having frightened them; many of them actually cried with vexation; *they had taken them for Yankees, & would certainly have scalped them if they had not recognized Mr. Rowland*; asked permission to spend the night with them & told them not to be afraid of their horses; & they made no attempt to steal.³

Earlier hopes for speedy white settlement of the west were now seen to be premature until a treaty had been concluded with the "original proprietors" of the land. The Indians were rightly

suspicious of the transient miners and settlers, and McDougall warned that "a collision with either party would bring upon this noble country all the horrors of not simply war, but massacre." How bitter this hatred was may be judged from an instance George McDougall reported in which a small camp of about thirty Blackfoot tents was attacked by American miners, and all killed but the Blackfoot chiefs, then "these were first put in irons, and then burnt to death." This dastardly act was in retaliation for the Indian massacres of the immigrants the previous fall.

The missionaries were not slow to lay much of the blame for the Indian unrest squarely at the door of the United States government policy on Indians. Some of the Indians they met in Canadian territory were refugees from the Indian wars that occurred at the time in the American midwest. These wars, they maintained, were caused by "the immorality and stupidity of men who had to do with the Indian Department of the United States." John McDougall had ample opportunity to observe American policy in operation during his trips to Fort Benton on the Missouri in the early 1870's. To kill an Indian was a meritorious act and life was very cheap; killing was thought little of. So treated, the Indians south of the border retaliated in like kind. Canadian Indians and whites alike feared the importation of this scandalous attitude into British territory. Dr. M. S. Wade comments in his book *The Overlanders of '62*:

Large bodies of emigrants journeyed overland from the Mississippi to California and Oregon long before the Canadians made the trek to Cariboo, but they left a trail of disaster and blood behind them; few parties of Americans crossed the plains without being attacked by Indians. None of the Canadian parties were molested in any way by Sioux, Crees, Blackfeet, or other tribe. They had no other protection save that achieved through decades of fair dealing with the natives by the fur traders.⁴

Canadians may be thankful that no Canadian parallel to the celebrated epitaph of the American west exists:

To Lem S. Frame, who during his life shot 89 Indians, whom the Lord delivered into his hands, and who was looking forward to making up his hundred before the end of the year, when he fell asleep in Jesus at his house at Hawk's Ferry, March 27, 1843.⁵

The missionaries played a statesmanlike role in championing the rights of the Indians and in urging upon the government of Canada the necessity for recognizing these rights. The combined people of Victoria and White Fish Lake, "anxious to arrest all coming trouble with the white man," drew up an address expressive of their loyalty, and praying for the appointments of new commissioners who should have power to settle grievances and to inform them about the policy of the government.

We, the undersigned Crees and the mixed Bloods of Victoria and White Fish Lake, resolved in our Council, to send this paper to our great Father, the new Governor of our country.

Great Chief! We welcome you and your people to the home of our Fathers; we are the friends of the white man, and are anxious that no trouble may ever arise between your children and others.

Great Chief! This paper speaks our minds, but some think differently; they have not been instructed, and we wish to tell you the whole truth; they are afraid that when the white man comes our hunting-grounds will be destroyed and our lands taken for nothing, and we and our children left to perish. These are their thoughts, and these thoughts might make mischief. They see the gold workers along our rivers, and some settlers making gardens on our lands, and these men have not asked our leave. Now we have no trouble with the miner or the gardener and we shall try and have none; but there are foolish people amongst us who might bring us trouble.

Great Father! Changes are coming over the Plain Indians. The Long-knives from the south are fast approaching. The buffalo tracks are growing over with grass and there are people who travel our country and tell us foolish things. All this disturbs the minds of the Natives.

Great Father! We ask that wise men might be sent to our Councils to tell us what you wish to do with our lands, and how much we are to keep for ourselves and our children.

Also how the Indian must behave towards the white man, and how the white man is to treat the Indian. Let these things be done very soon and a great weight will be lifted from our minds, and we believe the danger of trouble taken away from our country.⁶

George McDougall reminded his home office of the time both he and his son had spent amongst the Indians, attending their councils and listening to their speeches, and urged that if the

humane policy of the past were to be preserved there was no time to be lost. The Honourable Company's servants would co-operate gladly in lending their influence and the Indians who had attached themselves to the Protestant missions would be found loyal. He wrote:

With all the ardour of a Canadian who loves his country and who desires for its honour that justice may be done to these remnants of a once numerous people, I would advise that no time be lost in meeting them at their councils, treating with them for their lands, and by patient explanation, allay the present excitement . . . let this once be accomplished, and the country will speedily be settled.⁷

John McDougall carried the above address to the Crees. Reaching them in their camp near Battle River on December 28, 1869, he found them in a state of excitement because of sporadic fighting with the Blackfeet. John pressed on them the necessity of the intervention of the white man's government, which would ensure property rights and lasting peace for them. This plea was gladly received by the Indians of all creeds whom he reached, in spite of some opposition from the priest, the Rev. Fr. Scollen.

The Wesleyan Missionary Society supported its missionaries in the field in their contention that the authorities should treat with the Indians before settlers or even land surveyors should enter the territory. The society believed that law and military power alone would not be sufficient to ensure social agreement and peaceful dwelling together of the different races. They believed that "the religious element" had had much to do with the remarkable contrast between the Indian wars in the United States and the comparative lack of the same in Canada.

At any rate, it will be the duty of our rulers to respect the rights of thousands of Indians who now claim that territory as their own, and by which alone they live, principally through the chase and the productions of their vast rivers and lakes. If a wealthy corporation is to be paid three hundred thousand pounds sterling, beside other untold advantages, as the country becomes inhabited and improved the rights of the Indian must command the most thoughtful consideration of a Christian Government.

Justice, humanity, and good policy, all call for this; and in accomplishing this end there will be found no agency so powerful as the religious one.⁸

A TIME OF DISTRESS

THE TURBULENCE and unrest were added to by the first Northwest Rebellion in the Red River Settlement. In a letter of January 25, 1870, the Rev. George Young wrote from Red River of the escape from rebel custody of Dr. Shultz, their chief political prisoner, adding that Commissioners Smith and Hardisty and Dr. Cowan were little better than prisoners in the fort. Mr. Young had held service with them and the other prisoners, as well as his regular services. "As to the direction in which we are drifting," he added, "I give no opinion."

The crops on the upper Saskatchewan had failed the previous summer and the fish in the lakes were also failing, and George McDougall wrote that they lived the winter on flesh and pemmican. "Though the young folks enjoy good health, I can clearly see the effect is quite otherwise with Mrs. McDougall," he continued. Other prospects were encouraging. Seed had been carted from Red River and in April they were putting in their crop. The average congregation at Victoria was two hundred and they had built an end gallery in the church to accommodate sixty.

And now an additional source of anxiety arose with reports that smallpox was killing hundreds of Indians south of the border, with an intensification of war and rumour. George McDougall accompanied a Hudson Bay officer, Lawrence Clarke, to Edmonton, but they turned back because of tribal warfare between Blackfeet and Crees around the fort. This same outbreak involved David McDougall, the Rev. Peter Campbell and the H.B.C. trader from Pigeon Lake, who were approaching Edmonton from the south. This party and the Blackfoot war party nearly coincided on the south bank of the Saskatchewan nearly opposite Fort Edmonton. When the alarm was given most of the white party made their escape across the river and reached the shelter of the fort, leaving all their belongings on the south bank. David and Samson wanted to confront the Blackfeet, but the gentlemen in charge of the fort shut the gate and

would not permit it. David and Samson brought what goods they could across the river and left the rest, to be followed into the fort by a volley of bullets. No one was hurt, but the rest of the carts and their contents of leather, furs, clothing, blankets, pemmican, dried meat, tea and sugar fell to the Blackfeet as spoils of war. Peter Campbell wrote that if the warring Blackfeet should visit his mission in search of Stoney enemies, "though a Missionary, I should feel justified to allow 'faith and works' to go together, proving my 'faith by my works' and as far as possible inflict punishment on the blood-thirsty savages: but our prayer to God is, that such a calamity may be averted, and the counsel of the wicked be brought to foolishness."

Mr. Campbell was attempting to serve Edmonton as a preaching point from Woodville Mission, and lamented particularly losing all his bedding, his travelling shawl and overcoat in the scrape with the Blackfeet. He did not feel justified because of the unsettled condition in leaving his family alone for any length of time. He implored the Society to come to his aid in furnishing means to replace the mission house at Woodville:

Our hut is a miserable thing with a bark roof, and walls six feet and a half high, the roof allows the rain and melted snow to run through in streams, so that it is impossible for us to keep our bedding dry . . . the church is not fit to hold service in, being only little more than half roofed, and all our services are held in our little cabin. We will try, if possible, and make the church fit for divine service during the summer.⁹

With rumours coming in that the smallpox was gradually making its way north, exterminating whole bands in its course, the elder McDougall wrote: "if God does not avert the calamity, we shall see suffering greater than ever witnessed in this country. The vaccine received from England will not take effect. Please forward us some by letter."¹⁰

George McDougall wrote to Governor William McDougall urging on him the importance of sending in Commissioners to treat with the Indians before any surveyor or settlers should venture into the country "or some of us will pay the penalty with our lives for we have plenty of the same kind of *roughs* that have given trouble in Red River; and I might add, they have

the same kind of teachers, a hatred of everything that bears the name of English."¹¹ In reporting this action to his home office he concluded: "We are not in a position to inform our friends of all we know. This goes out with a free-trader."¹¹

During the winter of 1869-1870, when all communication with the Red River was cut off due to Fort Garry being in the hands of Riel and his party, the Saskatchewan country was without reliable news. At the same time United States troops drove the Blackfeet in United States territory across the border into Canada, and the Hudson's Bay Company, feeling it unsafe to deal with them, withdrew trade from them. It was for this reason that the Blackfeet attacked the Hudson's Bay Company at Fort Edmonton, as related above. McDougall feared that the some seven hundred French mixed-blood families living in the country from Fort Carlton west might join the Riel party in sympathy. He reported to his home office: "Priests and Fenians have disturbed the minds of the Crees. John has spent a hard winter among the Plains Crees, and has done much to remove bad impressions."¹¹ At this juncture he received a letter from Hudson's Bay Governor William Mactavish of Fort Garry telling him that since the company had withdrawn trade from the Blackfeet they would not be able to send in a cart train of supplies over the Carlton Trail for fear it would be captured, and that, therefore, the Saskatchewan and northern districts must look out for themselves.

In this dilemma a council was held at Edmonton and, reported G. McDougall, "the priests [were] called upon to declare their intentions. They were informed that it was our determination, come what would, not to take the oath prescribed by Riel and his ruffians. For the sake of these people they agreed to join us, and that Mr. Christie, a priest, and myself should lead a party to Fort Benton, and try to procure ammunition; and three hundred carts and one hundred armed men were to start May 23rd."¹¹

Five days after the council meeting a letter was received announcing that the Company had compromised with Riel and that "a British subject might, if very civil, come to Winnipeg." Hoping that lawful government would be re-established and

considering the trip to the Red River as the more feasible, McDougall and the Hudson's Bay officer went to Winnipeg. From there he wrote on June 18 to his head office, telling them of the events of the past winter and adding that, besides securing supplies, he hoped to accomplish two further objects. "First, the appointment of one hundred soldiers to Fort Edmonton." These would combine with the loyal local people and organize them, and provide protection against the "roughs" who were migrating from the Red River to the Saskatchewan. "Second: I wished to impress on the Government the importance of sending a Commissioner to visit the Crees. I would not advise that their lands should be treated for now; this might be premature; and they would be satisfied for the time if informed that they would be justly dealt with. If this is delayed, trouble is before us." His forecast of the future was that the Blackfeet, cut off by the United States troops and also from trading with the Hudson's Bay Company, would soon come to terms, and that the missionaries would make every effort to conciliate them. "The Crees, so far, are quiet—Our trouble is, that most of the French half-breeds will run for the Saskatchewan when the troops arrive—many are going now. How much Popery would like to frighten us out of the country! Thank the Lord, our Mission was never more prosperous."

He was fortunate in being able to purchase forty dollars worth of school books from the Right Rev. Robert Machray, Anglican Bishop of Rupert's Land.

The blood of a patriotic citizen flowed strongly in the veins of the Rev. George McDougall. He had been in the militia¹² in his youth, and he told John afterward "that after reaching the Red River and sizing up Riel and his troops in Fort Garry, he would have been delighted to be one of twenty men to go in and run the whole party out, but there were no men to respond." When Col. Garnet Wolseley and his forces of Royal Rifles, Royal Artillery, Royal Engineers and Canadian militia arrived at the gates of Fort Garry on August 24, 1870, however, the ill-fated rebellion had evaporated, and Riel had escaped south across the border.

The Victoria settlement had a skeleton population during the elder McDougall's absence at Red River of four men at the

H.B.C. post, and of John McDougall and a young Indian lad, Job, the women and children at the mission house. John and Job kept constant guard as far as possible. The Blackfeet made a raid, shot their cattle and stole their horses, but did not attack the mission house. To John a fight to the finish would sometimes have seemed preferable to the suspense of waiting and watching.

With word of the northward march of the deadly smallpox epidemic daily coming in, spread by the wandering tribes, the Victoria settlement was scattered as a precaution against the infection. John urged his Indians to seek isolation and of those who listened almost all escaped. But not all would listen. Many Plains Crees fled to the mission seeking refuge and soon it was surrounded by disease. The mission was soon immersed in doing what it could to relieve the suffering, and scenes of destitution, sorrow and death became commonplace. One day, returning to the mission from attending a deathbed, John felt the grip of the disease. He went into the mission house, isolated himself in a room emptied of furniture, took a bath in a tub of hot water, and gave himself a double dose of Dover's powder. The next day he was out again amongst the suffering. Some of the Indians were sullen and insolent, regarding this as a white man's disease. Hatred was stamped on many faces, even those who had been most friendly in the past. The whole missionary household took part in helping to alleviate the distress; John spoke of his mother's conduct as "sublime."

In the throes of this crisis John was sitting down to write a note to go to his father with a traveller, to speed the father's return, if possible, when without warning the elder McDougall appeared, having rushed back with all possible haste. He had heard word of the distress at the mission. With him came Mr. and Mrs. Hardisty and a single sister back from school in Ontario. The elder McDougall's coming was providential because in two days John took to bed again, this time with "inflammation of the lungs." Though John returned to work again in a month he said it was three years before he completely recovered his strength.

Meanwhile reports kept coming in of whole camps being wiped out by disease. In a letter dated Victoria, August 16, 1870, the

elder McDougall described the situation as he found it on his return home from Red River:

The Blackfeet, driven to desperation by the awful scourge which has cut off more than one half of their tribe, have sought to propitiate their deities by murder and robbery. They have stolen our horses and killed our cattle; articles of clothing and human hair, infected with the small-pox, have been left in our village . . . of a war-party numbering eleven, who made a raid on Victoria, ten died.

The Blackfeet, he reported, had likewise succeeded in infecting the Stoneys with the result that one-half of their nation died. Because the missionaries had all clothing belonging to a sick person destroyed, a social service problem was to find clothing for him when he recovered, and returned to his family. On October 21 the elder McDougall reported that multitudes who had recovered from the disease died from destitution. Yet he noted with gratitude that until this time not one of the old settlers at White Fish Lake or Victoria had died of the disease.

A different picture he reported of the Roman Catholic missions. The Oblates had followed the opposite plan, and instead of scattering their people had gathered them into large camps. The bodies of the dead and the infected together with the well were all collected in the church. "The spiritual power of the priest proclaimed the grand specific, but all has failed." By now McDougall feared that most of their Stoneys must have died. The disease worsened the feeling between the Roman Catholics and the Methodists as well as among the Indians, mixed-bloods and whites. The Protestants blamed "Jesuitism" as being at the bottom of the Blackfoot troubles. They further believed that they were represented as harbouring Blackfoot enemies, and even of killing Blackfeet.

By October, 1870, all within the Victoria Mission House, except Mrs. George McDougall had contracted the disease. Three of their daughters did not survive; Flora, who died October 13, aged 11; Georgiana, who died November 1, aged 19; and Anna, an adopted Indian daughter, who died October 28, aged 14. These and a company's officer were the only whites in the

entire Saskatchewan who died of the epidemic. Of the burial of Georgiana, the father wrote:

My kind neighbours, Messrs. Hardisty and Tate, brought the coffin and placed it at the gate, and my son and self carried her mortal remains to the grave. When we were filling in the earth, he uttered an expression which found an echo in my poor heart, "Father, I find it hard to bury our own dead": but just then the words of the Apostle were applied with such force to my mind that I could not restrain myself from shouting them aloud: "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? Thanks be to God who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ!"¹³

By November 18, after a quarantine of two months, public services of worship were resumed. "Both missionaries and people wept before the Lord."

By January 10, George McDougall reported that the epidemic was gradually dying out and recorded the foundation of one of the earliest hospitals in the west.¹⁴ The people of Victoria had erected a building for a hospital, and had instituted the first hospital insurance scheme, taxing themselves seventy-five cents a month for each male, over and above providing fuel and provisions for the hospital. This building was moved about 1921 to present-day Smoky Lake and named "The George McDougall Hospital," and with further additions over the years continued to serve as the community hospital under the auspices of The United Church of Canada, until 1957, when the community took it over as a municipal hospital.

The Rev. Peter Campbell wrote in January, 1871, that his Woodville mission had escaped the smallpox. On March 1, 1871, George McDougall wrote from Victoria that "the medical gentleman sent out by the 'Board of Health' is now returning to Red River—there have been very few cases of smallpox since the doctor's arrival." All wondered whether the epidemic had run its course or would break out afresh in the spring. Meanwhile the Territorial Government had proclaimed that nothing could be exported from the country, but the Hudson's Bay Company, in kindly consideration of the Indians' need for trade, had continued their business, taking in pelts in exchange for ammunition

and clothing. John McDougall was despatched to the great camp of Indians at Elk River in the far south, to interpret the government proclamations and to carry goodwill tokens of tobacco and ammunition from the Company.

On April 27, 1871, McDougall wrote that the Catholic bishop, Mr. Christie, and himself, had been appointed a "Board of Health." They assessed the number of deaths by smallpox as:

Blackfeet	676
Bloods	630
Piegans	1,080
Sarcees	200
Crees—Ft. Pitt	100
Edmonton	30
Victoria	55
White Fish Lake	15
St. Paul's	150
Carlton	78
French H.B. *St. Albert's	335
" " St. Ann's	40
Mountain Stoney's	123
	<u>Total 3,512</u>

* Half-Breeds

In late November Mr. McDougall left Victoria Mission for Edmonton in company with Capt. William F. Butler, Mr. Hardisty and Mr. Clarke. Captain Butler had received, following the arrival of Col. Wolseley's troops at Red River, a commission from Lieutenant-Governor Archibald of Manitoba, dated October 10, 1870, to make an independent investigation of conditions prevailing in the Saskatchewan country with special reference to the need for troops at the H.B.C. posts to assist in the maintenance of peace and order, the prevalence of smallpox, the distribution of the various Indian tribes, and the extent of illicit free trade. Captain Butler was favourably impressed with the beauty and fertility of the country between Victoria and Fort Edmonton. In Edmonton, acting as Commissioner, he conferred upon Chief Factor Christie and Chief Trader Hardisty commissions as magistrates for the western territory. Their powers could be only nominal until supported by some peace force.

During the Red River Rebellion of 1869-1870, the Saskatchewan country had been cut off from any mails for eight months. Now they received the promise of a monthly mail to begin the following summer. George McDougall improved the shining moments spent at Fort Edmonton by raising one hundred dollars towards finishing the Stoney (i.e. Woodville) church.

Captain Butler's impressions of the missions he visited are recorded in his book *The Great Lone Land*. Of the missionary work he saw at Victoria he said nothing, except that the two gentlemen who joined him there and travelled on with him to Edmonton "had resided long in the Upper Sask., and were acquainted with the tribes who inhabit the vast territory from the Rocky Mountains to Carlton House." But, on the other hand, he was fulsome in his praise of the missionary labours of the Roman Catholic priests at St. Albert:

This settlement is presided over by a mission of French Roman Catholic clergymen of the order of Oblates, headed by a bishop of the same order and nationality . . . men of culture and high mental excellence devoting their lives to the task of civilizing the wild Indians . . . if you sought him [the French missionary] in his lonely hut, you found ever the same surroundings, the same simple evidences of a faith which seemed more than human."

and later in his report to Lieutenant-Governor Archibald, he deplored

that the jarring interests of different religious denominations have sometimes induced them [the missionaries of the denominations] to introduce into the field of Indian theology that polemical rancour which so unhappily distinguishes more civilized communities.¹⁵

REFERENCES

¹*Missionary Notices*, series 2, p. 102.

²*Ibid.*, p. 103.

³*Cheadle's Journal of Trip Across Canada 1862-1863*, p. 147. Italics mine.

⁴P. xii.

⁵Cited by Gerald Kennedy in *The Pulpit*, Jan. 1956, p. 12.

⁶*Missionary Notices*, series 2, pp. 105, 106. The address is quoted in a letter from John McDougall, dated Victoria, January 5, 1870, "Long-knives" was the Indian name for Americans.

⁷*Ibid.*, p. 103.

⁸*Ibid.*, pp. 57, 58; Editorial comment in the issue of August 1, 1869, prefacing George McDougall's account of the slaying of Maskepetoon.

⁹*Annual Report*, 1870, pp. xvii, xviii.

¹⁰Edward Jenner (1749-1823), English physician, had discovered an effective smallpox vaccine in 1798. The dreaded scourge of smallpox after being introduced into America in the 16th century, repeatedly decimated the population. In 1781-1782 the plague covered the prairies, and David Thompson reported, "From what we could learn three-fifths died under the disease." In 1870-1871 an epidemic was raging in Europe as well as in America. "Vaccine as we know it must be kept 'cold' and fresh—it is not surprising the missionaries reported it would not take effect, if they meant they had used it and didn't get a reaction." (Medical opinion given by Nelson Nix, B.Sc., M.D., F.C.C.A.)

¹¹*Missionary Notices*, series 2, p. 126; letter dated Red River, June 18, 1870.

¹²McDougall had been a private in Captain Armstrong's Company, Her Majesty's Regiment of Royal Foresters, during the uprising of 1837.

¹³*Missionary Notices*, series 2, pp. 147, 148, 149; letter dated Victoria, Dec. 2, 1870.

¹⁴It is usually an uncertain and risky process to assign "first" to the various stages of pioneer development in a new country. However, the writer believes that a very good case can be made that the hospital here alluded to was the first to be built and opened in the present Province of Alberta. In his book *Early Medicine in Alberta*, Edmonton, 1947, Heber C. Jamieson, M.B., F.R.C.P(C), Sometime Professor of the History of Medicine, University of Alberta, states: "The Macleod Hosptial, constructed in 1874, was the first in Alberta. In 1875 Fort Walsh had one. Other western posts followed: Qu'Appelle in 1881, Calgary in 1877, Regina in 1883, Maple Creek in the same year. Battleford and Prince Albert had hospitals in 1884. Lethbridge in 1886 had a mine hospital which was open to the police. Three years later they constructed their own hospital there." Early care of the sick was also provided by the Grey Nuns at St. Albert's Youville Convent (a school) and at the Hermitage, some eight miles down the river from Edmonton by Miss Newton, a trained nurse from England, the sister of the Rev. Canon Newton, beginning in 1886. It seems appropriate that the earliest hospitals in the country should have been established by the Christian Churches, as of old.

¹⁵Pp. 360, 361. Captain Butler was a Roman Catholic, for he received the Holy Communion from the Rev. Albert Lacombe, O.M.I., when he reached the Rocky Mountain House.

5

Beginnings at Edmonton, 1871-1876

AT THE DISTRICT meeting in March, 1871, the decision was made that the chairman, George McDougall, should move to Edmonton with his family, leaving John in charge of Victoria. The Rev. P. Campbell, during his one year's residence at Edmonton, had procured logs for the new mission and then had moved to Woodville, subsequently visiting Edmonton at three-week intervals. But such an arrangement would not do justice to the growing importance of this chief Hudson's bay post on the Saskatchewan. By 1870 it was expected that it would grow and that troops would be stationed there. The Methodist Saskatchewan district was still short a missionary, and the chairman lamented that John was not ordained and able to perform the ordinances required on his missionary journeys. If the projected new work among the Blackfeet on the Bow River was to be undertaken, more missionaries would be needed. With Mr. McDougall at Edmonton, however, Peter Campbell could add Rocky Mountain House to his regular appointments, hoping thereby to counteract the work of the Roman Catholic priests among the Blackfeet, Sarcees and Mountain Stoneys who traded there. In June, 1871, the Rev. George McDougall moved his family to Fort Edmonton. As he attempted to cross the swollen Sucker Creek, the swift water, deeper than expected, swept the buckboard he was driving down the stream,

and the reins became wound around his arm. He was saved when he succeeded in biting the reins from his arm and was then able to swim to shore. The horse found his footing on a bar farther down the creek.

In his first letter from Edmonton dated August 1, 1871, the elder McDougall reported that in March peace had been made between the Crees and Blackfeet and most of the mixed-bloods. Large numbers of Blackfeet, Bloods and Piegans were again trading at Fort Edmonton, and he had been ministering to them. "Poor fellows! Physically, they are the finest Indians I have ever seen; morally, the darkest." During John McDougall's absence on a trip to Rocky Mountain House in the early spring, tragedy had struck again, with the sudden and unexplained death of Abigail, his wife, on April 11, at the age of twenty-three, leaving three small children. George McDougall said of his daughter-in-law, "When we remember her want of early advantages, she was a superior woman . . . she was a direct fruit of missionary effort."

Before leaving the Victoria mission, on April 27, Mr. McDougall had reported that, in preparation for his move, the new Edmonton mission house had been contracted to be built and the money subscribed. The actual building, however, went forward more slowly than expected, and when the family arrived in June they were temporarily housed in the Hudson's Bay fort. The missionary family had hoped to be in their new house by the first of September, but actually moved in on December 27, grateful to the Company for free quarters in the fort and for valuable assistance in the building of the house. The "new and comfortable Parsonage" was a thing of beauty in their eyes, 23 x 33 feet, two stories high, and ceiled with boards. In addition there was a stable completed, 30 x 15 feet. Not counting the value of the missionary's own labour, the buildings cost \$1,023.62. His labour on them had been continuous for the preceding five months. Their furniture, at the time of moving in, consisted of one small table, three chairs and a work bench.

Although there was still owing a balance of \$193.62 against the house, it was decided in view of the pressing need to open a building fund for a church immediately. All friends of the

mission in the locality and in the east were invited to contribute. Lumber at the time cost \$75 a thousand feet in the pinery, still being sawn by manual labour in the saw-pit. The generous gift of nails, glass, butts, screws, etc., from a benefactor from Montreal, James Ferrier, Esq., had benefited four missions four years before, and McDougall hoped for similar generosity again. Such was the enthusiasm of the local people at Edmonton for the new mission that before his annual report for the year 1871 had been sent off the debt on the mission house was liquidated and the new subscription list for the church begun. By the following August this sum, to which the Honourable Company's officers and others had contributed, had reached \$1,118.

Meanwhile, at Victoria mission, the bereft John McDougall had his sister, who had been assisting her mother in teaching school in Fort Edmonton, moved down to keep house for him. It was the winter of his discontent. He was at a location not of his own choosing, sometimes tempted to think that his church did not want him, and only his sense of duty and a conviction of his divine calling held him to his post. At the same time his father was looking south, hoping to send him to inaugurate the long-awaited mission among the Blackfeet. If this could be done, another ordained man would be needed for Victoria.

The chairman, although rejoicing in the longest peace that they had witnessed among the Indian tribes in many years, and grateful for a plentiful supply of buffalo, was nevertheless anxious that a military force should be sent in to secure the protection of all. Though Riel and his party had been evicted from the Red River, troublesome elements were still in the country. The mining communities of interior British Columbia were only ten travelling days distant and "a large proportion" of the transient parties passing through were known to be disloyal. George McDougall wrote:

We have the same elements at work in this country that brought about the rebellion in Red River . . . last fall a meeting was held only ten miles from this place,¹ presided over by a bishop, at which it was proposed to appropriate tracts of land for the use of French half-breeds, estimated by a competent engineer at over two millions of acres—including the Company's reserve

and our Mission Property—and all this without asking our leave. The party had memorialized the Government about it—the English mixed-bloods are without exception, opposed to the movement—they would regard their being made a separate people a great misfortune. . . . They have anticipated Canadian rule with with great satisfaction, and hope to enjoy the privileges and protection of British subjects.²

The McDougall family was augmented when David returned from the east with his bride, Annie, “a bright, fresh, healthy, young Scotch-Canadian woman.”

The building of the new mission house at Edmonton meant an intensely active period for the chairman, “much mental worry, much hard physical labour, everything done by hand—chopping, sawing, planing without any machinery . . . and with all this came the week-night meetings and all the Sunday work. Other men rested but the missionary never . . . no wonder the lines multiplied on his face and his hair became gray.”³

Early in 1872 the District Meeting decided that John and the Rev. Peter Campbell should exchange stations, Campbell going to Victoria and John returning to Woodville. The change took place in the spring, and John found the work at Woodville thriving. On May 3 the Chairman went to Woodville to attend the local Quarterly Meeting. His first task on arrival was to shake hands “with upwards of 300 persons.” The day’s programme on the Sabbath began with a prayer meeting at sunrise. At 10 o’clock service

so many were compelled to stand at the doors and windows that we resolved to take to the fields. At 2 p.m. we met to administer the Sacraments, and hold a love-feast, but all our plans had to be changed. Thirty couples, who had lived as heathen, requested Christian marriage. They had resolved to join the church, and to submit to every ordinance. We then baptised 28 children, and 2 adults, and administered the Lord’s Supper to 153 . . . the head Chief remarked, “some of us have been two days without food, but the joy of our hearts has made us forget our hunger.” The best was to come; fifty spoke at the love-feast, and when we remember how few have been their privileges, the depth of their spiritual experience demonstrated the work to be of God. To God we ascribe the glory.⁴

On Monday council meetings were held, fixing a boundary line between the hunting grounds of Cree and Blackfeet. The Indians were counselled to regard the whisky-trader as their most deadly enemy. The old appeal for a mission on the Bow River was renewed. The head Chief, Bear's Paw, said, "we tremble at the future—no implements—no centre. Tell our praying fathers, when you meet them at Red River, that we send salutations. We are all their people."

FIRST WESLEYAN MISSIONARY CONFERENCE IN THE WEST:
WINNIPEG—JULY, 1872

A MARK OF THE growing importance of the Methodist work in the west was the first missionary conference held in Winnipeg in July, 1872. To it came an able delegation of church officials from Toronto to meet with almost all the missionary force then situated in the western districts.

The missionaries from the Saskatchewan district travelled in two parties. The McDougall party consisted of father and John riding in a buckboard, accompanied by two helpers, George, a younger son, and Susa, a native, with a cart and nine loose horses. Following the familiar old Red River trail the party maintained a steady pace: about seventy miles a day, six days a week. About three hundred miles out from Winnipeg they overtook the rest of the western party: Steinhaur, Campbell, and Mr. Snyder, the teacher. It was John McDougall's first view of Winnipeg and Fort Garry in eight years.

Here occurred one of the earliest known instances of conference billet-jumping. John McDougall and his men camped outside "the small cluster of buildings called Winnipeg, and found willows for campfire and grass and water for horses." This was a source of wonder, if not scandal, to the eastern deputation, who remarked in their report, "[They] preferred camping on the Prairie, in the vicinity of the town, during the whole of their stay, choosing the air and freedom of such a home before the best accommodation they could have in the houses of friends who would willingly have received them as guests for their work's sake."⁵ These westerners were outdoor men, and it is hard to

imagine Susa and the others resting comfortably between clean sheets in a strange billet. John sometimes spoke of the houses of the east as being stuffy and overheated.

The deputation from the east remarked on the comparative ease with which Winnipeg could now be reached in comparison with the old days when the journey by water and portage over the old canoe route from Montreal could be undertaken only by those of rugged constitution and great endurance. It seemed wonderful to them that about this time the railway had reached within seventy miles of Fort Garry. They had come by steamboat down the Red River for seven hundred miles, and it is plain that they had not yet reached the ultimate in travel comfort, improvements notwithstanding. Dr. Punshon found the mosquitoes "as blood-thirsty cannibals as ever stuck spears into human flesh" and he must have been impatient at the slow progress of the river trip, for he spoke of the "tortuous character of the river, which winds so persistently and so extremely, that we passed by a man's house on two sides of it, and were half an hour by the watch in getting from one side to the other."⁶

The meetings were called to begin on August 1 in the Wesleyan Church in Winnipeg, but all being present by the 25th of July, they began their meetings on the 26th. Rev. W. Morley Punshon, LL.D., President of the Canada Conference, Wesleyan Methodist Church; Rev. Enoch Wood, D.D., Secretary of the Missionary Society; and J. Macdonald, Treasurer of the Society, were the deputation from the east. The missionaries present were: Rev. George Young, Winnipeg, Chairman of the Red River District; Rev. George McDougall, Edmonton House, Chairman of the Saskatchewan District; Rev. Michael Fawcett, High Bluff; Rev. Matthew Robinson, High Bluff; Rev. Nelson R. Brown, superannuated, High Bluff; Rev. H. B. Steinhaur, White Fish Lake; Rev. Peter Campbell, Victoria; Rev. J. McDougall, Woodville; Rev. E. R. Young, Rossville, Norway House; Rev. A. Bowerman, Winnipeg; and George Edwards, a candidate for the ministry. The only absentee was J. Sinclair, native teacher at Oxford House.

The deputation received favourable impressions of the "healthy and prosperous condition" of all the missions. The day schools

were receiving strong support from the Hudson's Bay Company officers and settlers. The establishment of the new mission to the Blackfeet on the Bow River was approved, and hope was expressed that another missionary might be sent. A resolution that the remoter missions should be personally visited by an officer of the Society was answered in 1873 by the visit of the Rev. Lachlin Taylor, D.D. During a free period the delegates were entertained hospitably by Governor Sir Donald A. Smith (later Lord Strathcona and Mount Royal)⁷ at his home.

It was the day of public oratory. Dr. Punshon stimulated the public gatherings with his famous lectures, "The Men of the *Mayflower*" and "Daniel in Babylon." At long last, on the Sabbath, the 30th of July, 1872, John McDougall was ordained, being then thirty years of age. There were no examinations or trial sermons; he was accepted on the merits of twelve years' missionary work. The ordination service took place in a large Hudson's Bay Company warehouse on the bank of the Assiniboine River, fitted up for the occasion with bunting and improvised seats, the church not being large enough. Sir Donald Smith occupied the chair, on the platform was Lieutenant-Governor Archibald, Dr. Punshon preached, and the laying on of hands was by Drs. Punshon and Wood and the Revs. George Young and George McDougall. In the afternoon a missionary meeting was held, in the evening Dr. Wood preached, and the day concluded with the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, "at which were present Christians of all colours, white and red and yellow." It had been a great day in the religious life of the early west.

THE FLEMING EXPEDITION

FOLLOWING the Conference, George and John McDougall took separate paths: the father and his two helpers turned west, while John joined the official deputation on a visit to Ontario. Both trips were memorable. The father accompanied the Sanford Fleming expedition from Winnipeg westward to Edmonton. Political considerations were dictating that immediate steps be taken to link the eastern provinces with the newly founded province of British Columbia, which had come into Confederation in July, 1871. The Dominion government had promised

British Columbia that a railway line would be completed within ten years, and surveyors had started from both ends in the summer of 1871. Sandford Fleming, engineering chief of the Dominion Government, decided to make a personal inspection of the proposed route in the summer of 1872. The route selected by him crossed the Rockies through the Yellowhead Pas.

With Fleming's party was the Rev. George M. Grant, later Principal of Queen's University, acting as secretary. In his book *Ocean to Ocean*, Dr. Grant described their entire journey in unhurried detail, including his independent observation of the Methodist missions they visited. As they travelled on the cart trail the perceptive secretary plied the veteran missionary McDougall with all manner of questions, but Mr. McDougall was not a voluble man and preferred to let his missions speak for themselves. His practical arts and skills on the trail were invaluable to the expedition. At Victoria mission they stopped over Sunday and the party attended church services. Grant wrote:

When we arrived at the church, it was almost filled with about eighty whites, half-breeds, and Crees. The men sat on one side, the women on the other, and the children in a little gallery or loft with the schoolmaster and monitors. The service was in English, but some Cree hymns were sung, and Mr. McDougall announced that there would be service in Cree in the evening, through the medium of an interpreter. The conduct of all present from first to last was most devout, notwithstanding that many present understood but imperfectly what was said. The children led the singing, and though there was a lack of bass voices on account of the absence of the principal members of the choir, it was singularly sweet and correct. Some of us were moved more than we cared to show, when the first Cree hymn was sung.

Service over, two of our party dined at the Mission House, and the others at the Fort; and, after a walk through the settlement along the bank of the river, we returned to the church to see the Sunday School. Mr. McKenzie the teacher, was about to leave for another mission, and his successor, Mr. Snyder, was also present. There were sixty names, forty of them half-breeds, and twenty Indians, on the roll: but only thirty-two were present, as whole families were absent, freighting or hunting. We examined the three advanced classes, numbering twenty-one, of

the biggest boys and girls. All read the English Bible more or less fluently and with understanding, for they answered every question put to them. Their knowledge of hymns was such as could be found only in a Methodist school; if any of us named a hymn in the collection, the tune was at once raised and all joined in without books. The more ambitious tunes were of course the favourites with the children. The Indians delight in hymn singing, the missionaries take advantage of this and make it one great means of reaching their hearts. Heathen Crees who come to Victoria only for a few weeks send their children to the school; they pick up some hymns at any rate, and sing them when far away on the plains.⁸

The encounter between the Sandford Fleming expedition and the Methodist missionaries turned out to be mutually agreeable. They were evidently like-minded in more respects than one, for Mr. McDougall commented, "If all travellers in Indian countries were to manifest the same good qualities and treat the Indians as did the Chief Engineer and party, there would be few Indian wars." At the close of the Sabbath School Sandford Fleming handed Mr. McDougall \$10, which he subsequently made \$20, remarking, "We can ask for no stronger proofs of success than that which we have witnessed this day in these sixty Sabbath-School children."

Meanwhile, at Fort Garry, John McDougall boarded the river steamboat *International* in company with Drs. Punshon and Wood and Mr. J. Macdonald. As they travelled, John's easy familiarity with the ways of the west was communicated to the eastern visitors. It would seem that John McDougall never quite overcame a sense of his own academic inadequacy, especially when with people who had more formal schooling than he. He delighted in showing his attainments in practical matters in which these more effete brethren were deficient. It was the old story of the self-taught man versus the university-trained. And yet John was himself a kind of specialist, highly trained in his adaptation to the needs and demands of his own western environment, and as such he had no cause to feel inferior. In Toronto he requested that he be allowed to spend a year in college. This was denied him as being not an essential but a luxury. The church fathers did however, counsel the young widower to look around

for a life companion, gently reminding him that his time in Ontario was short. In late September, his quest successful, he married Miss Eliza Boyd at Cape Rich. Their "honeymoon trip" was the long arduous journey back into the Saskatchewan, the first part of it jointly, and unexpectedly, with two families travelling to the Red River.

By the time they had reached Fort Garry and picked up their horses, a new "democrat" previously ordered and a cart, it was so late in October that no one could be found to make the trip with them, so John and his bride set off alone. It was an epic journey, and a measure of the venturesome spirit of the two—John, well aware of the dangers in the still lawless country; and Eliza, totally unused to the life she was entering and mercifully unconscious of what lay ahead. On their way they encountered many hard-looking Sioux, fugitives from a massacre in Minnesota, a raging snow storm that forced them into camp, and river crossings through water carrying floating ice. The segment of the trail between Forts Carlton and Pitt took them seventeen days and nights of extreme hardship. They were not equipped for winter. At Pitt they were warmly welcomed, but the snow was now so deep as to be impassable for their wheeled vehicles, so they left these behind and proceeded with horse toboggans. It must have been a strange looking bridal pair who arrived finally at Victoria mission; John leading the way on snowshoes, Eliza next in a long coffin-like toboggan pulled by a horse, then another toboggan carrying kit and "everything else" lashed to it, and a helper, Sandy, who had been engaged at Fort Pitt following with spare horses, one of them John's favourite "Little Bob" nearly too exhausted to continue, bringing up the rear. By New Year's, having rested and gathered together John's three small daughters, they were at home at Woodville Mission, Pigeon Lake. It was more than three months since they had set out from Cape Rich, Ontario, and the young Mrs. McDougall had received a rigorous baptism into her new life in the far northwest.

With characteristic vigour George McDougall plunged into the work of establishing the new mission premises at Fort Edmonton. In his object he knew himself to be fully seconded

by the Missionary Society in Canada, for while the Honourable Company had long extended their hospitality within the post to Rundle, Woolsey and the present missionaries, the Society had long "been impressed with the great desirableness of having independent mission premises" at the place, and looked to him as chairman of the district to begin the enterprise.

A year after moving into the new mission house, he could report that the new Methodist church at Edmonton was all enclosed (i.e. the walls were up and the roof on), but that the season had been too far advanced to allow them to finish it the previous fall, and that they hoped to finish it in the spring of 1873. His annual report for 1872 shows that his mind was full of plans for the coming season. He and John would go to Bow River to locate Morleyville,⁹ about which they were both deeply anxious. He hoped to visit Canada by fall, giving two reasons: he felt it only right that his wife should see her parents once more, and he needed to raise money for the debt of "several hundred dollars" which he expected would have accrued in finishing the Edmonton church, and adding a kitchen to the mission house. He also had on his mind the care of the other missions, Woodville, White Fish Lake and Victoria, and his ministrations to the Blackfeet, Crees and Stoneys provided daily distractions. "One wants a baby baptized, another a smoke, a third medicine. One came 200 miles to have his foot cut off; and now that there is peace, it is ten times worse than ever." Reports came in from the Mountain Fort that the Blackfeet were suffering many deaths, he thought by scarlet fever, and he might have to visit them. Three cold-blooded murders had occurred within sight of the mission house door: "Kelly River desperadoes and Yankee whisky the cause." Nevertheless, pastoral work went on.

The big event of 1873 was the personal visit of inspection of the Rev. Lachlin Taylor, General Secretary of the Missionary Society, to the Saskatchewan missions. For a reverend gentleman accustomed to the settled east, whose habitat was principally the mission offices in Toronto, to make the trip at all was a physical *tour de force*. This is clearly implied in his official report of the trip where he catalogues his tour as follows:

By Rail	3,414 miles
Open Boat	920 "
Bark Canoe	200 "
Stage	634 "
Buck Boarding (waggon)	1,933 " 10

Dr. Taylor's route included Fort Garry and Winnipeg, by boat to Norway House and Rossville, back to Winnipeg, over the cart trail to the missions of the Saskatchewan, south from Edmonton through Woodville station, Pigeon Lake, south through Blackfoot country to the Bow River and the future Morleyville, and finally, south to Fort Benton on the head waters of the Missouri in Montana, and thence by stage coach and rail back to Toronto.

John McDougall, accompanied by his very good friend Jacob Big Stoney, travelled in buckboard and on horseback over the old cart trail from Edmonton to Winnipeg to escort Dr. Taylor into the Saskatchewan. If it was true that Dr. Taylor was inspecting the west, it was also true that the west was inspecting him, for ecclesiastical visitors were a novelty. John was not one to dawdle, and they averaged fifty miles a day returning over the plains. Reaching Fort Pitt, they were pleasantly surprised to be met by George McDougall and Peter Campbell, who had come thus far to meet them. At White Fish Lake mission they were disappointed to find that Mr. Steinhaur, the teacher, their families and the majority of the community were far off on the plains hunting buffalo. Benjamin Sinclair greeted them at White Fish, however, and the General Secretary presented him with \$120 to reimburse him for a previous loss he had suffered when his canoe had upset. Dr. Taylor's report, which is given with general exactitude, is useful in charting the progress of the missions as at 1873. At White Fish Lake, after seventeen years, the membership was 118, the congregation 200, the school 60 children. The premises were a mission lot of five or six acres, "a plain log church, 30 x 20, a Mission house with five rooms, and a kitchen, neat and comfortable, and a stable that answers the purpose, and all erected with the Missionary's own hands, with what help the Indians could give him, and without expense to

the Society." Missionary secretaries ever have an eye to the budget!

At Victoria, Dr. Taylor commented that the church and mission-house had been built in two years, costing \$2,000,

which was all defrayed by local contribution and personal effort. There are about ten acres enclosed, which is considered the Mission lot, although in reality, there are no bounds to the north till you reach the Arctic Circle. The Mission-house has eight rooms, four above and four below; a fine garden; a snug church, which must soon give place to a larger one as it will only hold about 150. . . . Membership 70—30 of whom were received on trial in the revival last spring, under the labours of Brother Campbell . . . the congregation is about 120; 60 children in the school during the week, and 65 on the Sabbath.¹¹

Dr. Taylor, like other visitors before him such as Captain Butler and the Sandford Fleming party, remarked on the park-like beauty of the country as they made the two-day trip from Victoria to Edmonton, seventy-one miles distant. He spoke in the highest terms of the elder McDougall's perseverance and success and noted that though McDougall's predecessors, Rundle and Woolsey, had laboured faithfully at Fort Edmonton "no premises were erected and no class formed, and the services were held in the Fort," and for the period immediately before it had been visited only occasionally until

McDougall went and properly established the Mission. . . . Now there are 20 members; a congregation of about 60, and constantly increasing . . . the new church which we dedicated, is a neat building, well finished; the work having been done by the Rev. Benjamin Jones¹² in good style. The dimensions are 32 feet long and 24 feet wide, and all the pews were let before it was dedicated. The Mission-house has five rooms, with a large kitchen; and the premises cost at least \$2,000. only \$500. of which was granted by the society. The lot joins the fine property of the company (who own 3,000 acres in a block) and is 50 rods frontage on the Saskatchewan, and runs back or north to some imaginary line between that and the North Pole. The whole of that region covers one of the finest and largest coal beds in the world. The services on Sabbath were, sermon and dedication in the morning; sermon in Cree in the afternoon, by Bro. J. McDougall; and Bro. Campbell preached an excellent sermon in the evening.¹¹

General Secretary Taylor had plainly become infected with the McDougalls' Chamber-of-Commerce enthusiasm for the future of this new country. About each mission station he broke out into purple prose. The soil at White Fish Lake was "rich as Solomon's gardens," the lake "abounding with the finest fish in America." The mission lots were apparently bounded on the north by the Arctic Circle, though one would think that a property-wise mission executive would have wanted to be more precise. The Woodville mission was located on Pigeon Lake, "one of the very finest lakes in America. . . [fit to] find its place in the fellowship of Como, Maggiore, Lucerne, Windermere, or Loch Lomond."

Dr. Taylor did less than justice in describing the new church he dedicated at Edmonton. The church is a piece of very fine pioneer construction. By great fortune this building has survived, and it was thoroughly restored by a special committee in 1946 under the auspices of Edmonton Presbytery of The United Church of Canada. Its survival is testimony to its sound construction, rather than to good management after the pioneer period. It served regularly for Methodist worship, and was also used by other denominations coming into the pioneer community, until in 1892 it was moved across the road to give way to a larger frame building necessary to meet the needs of a growing community. Subsequently it has been moved at least four times, serving at one time as a boys' dormitory for Alberta College, at another for storage of odds and ends. The original pulpit, according to Dr. J. H. Riddell, the first Principal of Alberta College, was made by Chief Factor Hardisty. Later one of the posts of the discarded pulpit was made into "senior sticks" for the early student government. Credit for the ultimate restoration of the original church is due to the foresight of the late Rev. Dr. F. S. McCall, the Rev. R. E. Finlay and others, at a time when the present revival of interest in pioneer objects and people had scarcely begun.

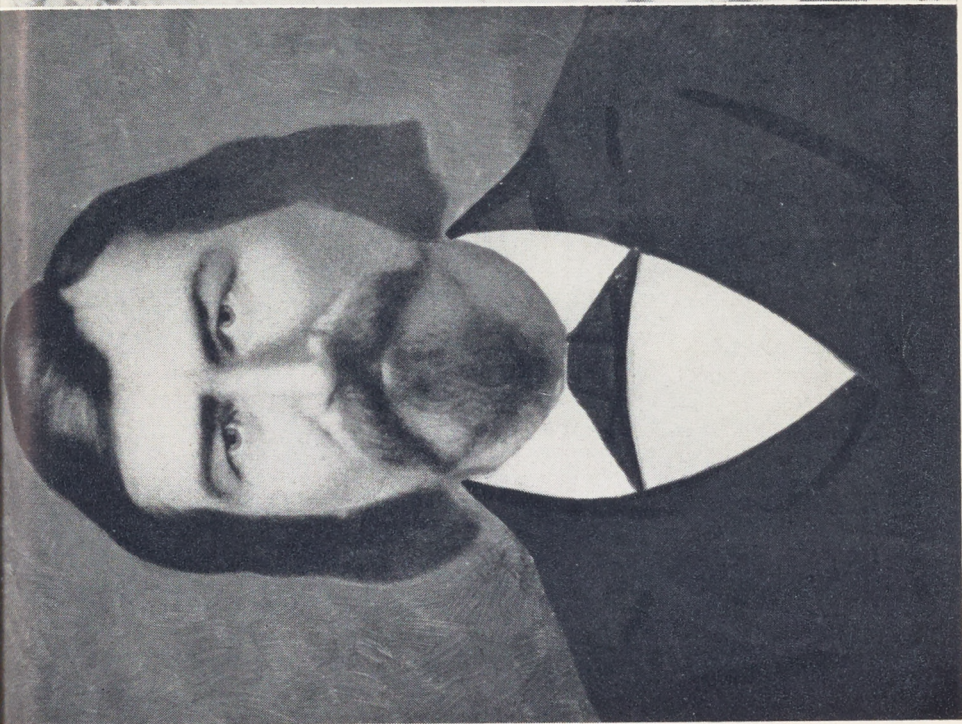
The church was built in "the old fashioned Hudson's Bay style," having at the corners and windows vertical posts into which the horizontal logs which form the walls were joined. The span is not always as long as ten feet, and the logs were

skillfully faced by hand. The interior was not ceiled, but has exposed rafters and trusses. At one time the church had a small gallery, which was not restored, access to it being by a little stairway leading up from the left of the front door.

The church was adorned by a "beautiful stained glass window,¹³ an object of admiration on the part of the natives," the gift of Colonel Lewis of London, Ontario, the first of a succession of such gifts. About the same time "a valuable and expensive" stained glass window was forwarded by W. T. Mason, Esq. of Toronto, for the new church at Morleyville, and on January 11, 1875, the Rev. Lewis Warner wrote from Edmonton acknowledging gifts of "a beautiful chandelier, lamps and oil" from John Macdonald, Esq. of Toronto, for the Edmonton church, and two more stained glass windows, one from Jos. McCausland, Esq. of Toronto, for Edmonton, and the other from R. Lewis, Esq. of London, for Morleyville. John Macdonald also sent "a large and fine-toned bell," a much appreciated and useful gift in a region not overly supplied with time-pieces, for the church at Woodville. The missions in the Northwest were not being forgotten by the brethren in the home church.

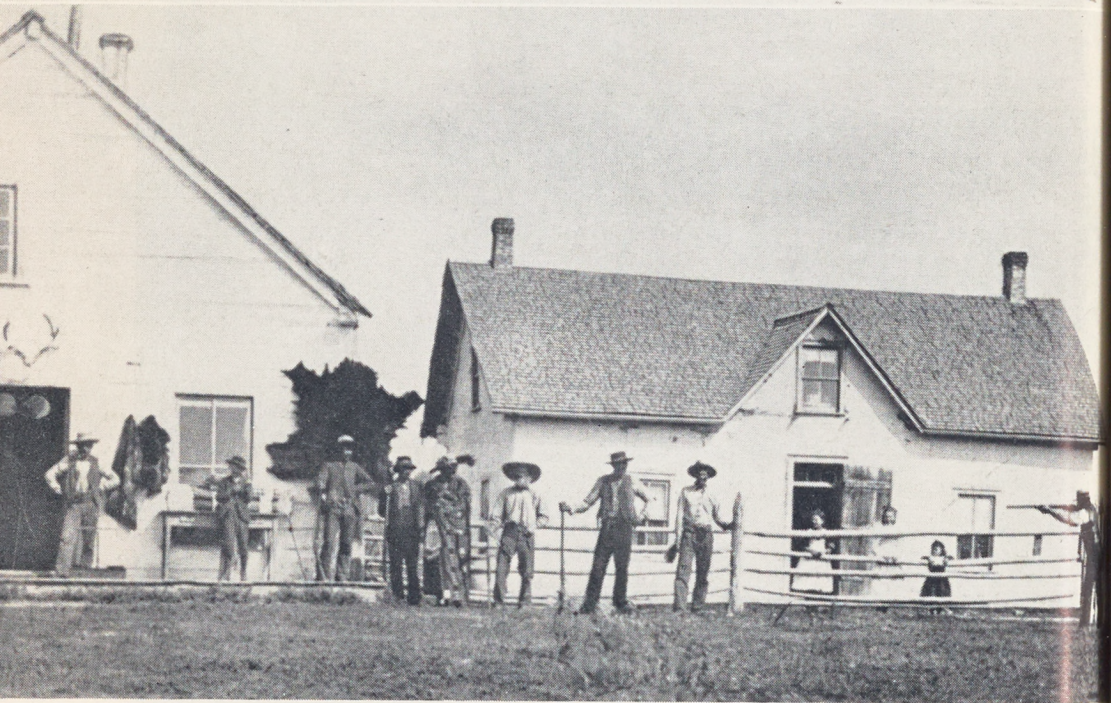
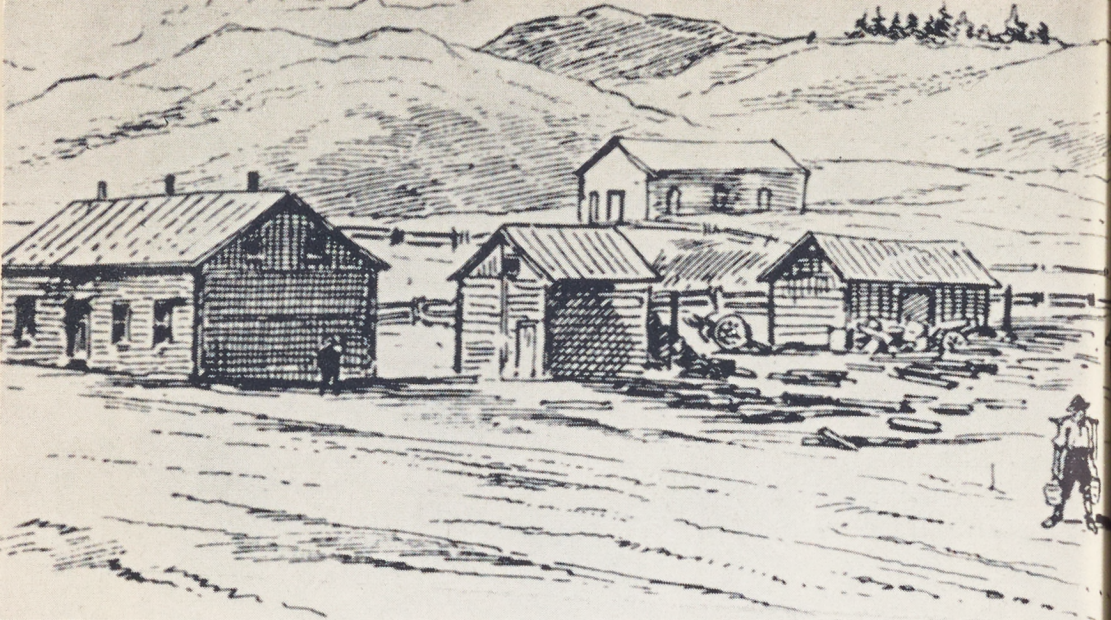
The restorers of 1946 saw fit to add a bell tower to house the bell which originally had hung from a cross-beam erected on two posts outside the front door. The early photographs show the little pioneer church without a tower.

Having visited Woodville, Dr. Taylor, the two McDougalls, Mr. A. J. Snyder, the teacher, who had decided for the ministry and was now leaving the Saskatchewan country, and two Indians whom Dr. Taylor insisted were "servants" though they were never referred to by the McDougalls as such, now set off to survey the new mission field in the Bow River valley. They met four small camps of Crees along the way and had services and council with them. Further on, on the open prairie, a scout "from the savage and ferocious Blackfeet, who were camped in their strength a short distance from us, galloped into their camp and sounded the alarm that 'American traders' were approaching." The missionary party was soon surrounded by "some 60 men armed to the teeth," the Blackfeet who had mistaken them for the traders. When they had been identified as missionaries and men of peace



Left: BENJAMIN SINCLAIR, MIXED-BLOOD LAY ASSISTANT AND EVANGELIST.

Right: CROWFOOT, CHIEF OF THE BLACKFEET.



METHODIST MISSION, MORLEYVILLE, BOW RIVER.

HUDSON'S BAY COMPANY'S FORT VICTORIA
(Now Pakan, Alberta)

they were kept in the Blackfoot camp, detained in the chief's lodge at his order.

In this setting the McDougalls, especially John, were quite at home (if uneasy at the moment), whilst Dr. Taylor (according to John) began to exhibit an increasing aversion to any contact with the natives. Dr. Taylor himself speaks only of "our physical discomfort" in the situation, and afterwards stated that they had been signally delivered by the Angel of the Lord. Taylor was probably an embarrassment to the McDougalls because he refused to sleep in the Blackfoot lodge. He and Mr. Snyder made their beds under the wagon, pulling their tent over it. John, piqued at their obstinacy, didn't mention to them the two or three hundred pounds of fresh meat killed that day, and now in the wagon, which steadily dripped blood on them during the night.

After worshipping in the Blackfoot camp, they continued on their way unharmed, and in due course camped near the future Morleyville, averred by Dr. Taylor to be "the most romantic and grandest site for Mission premises in all our work, if not in all America." There was to be a reserve of twenty miles on each side of the Bow River for the Stoneys and, it was hoped, the Blackfeet could be induced to come there also.

Dr. Taylor's summary of this part of his trip was:

My ten weeks uninterrupted travel and intercourse with Bro. John McDougall strengthened my attachment to him daily, and my admiration of his character, as well as his eminent qualifications, for that important work to which God hath called him. And the father, as well as the son, has a peculiar adaptation for opening up and laying the foundations of Missions in that country, that shall be the *nuclei* of extensive evangelistic multitudes that will yet find a home in that wonderful land.¹¹

The early Methodists were nothing if not zealous, and continuing south they made their way through the American whisky fort country to the forts Kipp and Whoop-up where they held religious services and were looked upon as "curios." Crossing the international boundary they reached Fort Benton, Missouri

River, on September 24, 1873. From this point Dr. Taylor and Mr. Snyder took the "Concord coach and four," eventually to reach home via the Central Pacific Railroad.

REFERENCES

¹Doubtless at the Roman Catholic mission at St. Albert.

²*Missionary Notices*, series 2, p. 244.

³J. McDougall, *In the Days of the Red River Rebellion*, pp. 207, 208.

⁴*Missionary Notices*, series 2, p. 247.

⁵*Annual Report of the Missionary Society of the Wesleyan Methodist Church in Canada, 1872*, p. lxxxix.

⁶*Missionary Notices*, series 2, p. 264.

⁷John McDougall dedicated his book *In the Days of the Red River Rebellion*, published 1903, "To my very much esteemed friend and patron Lord Strathcona and Mount Royal."

⁸Pp. 187, 188.

⁹Named in honour of the Rev. W. Morley Punshon, at that time President of the Canada Conference of the Wesleyan Methodist Church.

¹⁰*Annual Report, 1873-1874*, p. ciii. For some reason he has not included his mileage on horseback.

¹¹*Ibid.*, pp. xcix-ciii.

¹²The Rev. Benjamin Jones came into the Saskatchewan country with his wife in company with David McDougall in the summer of 1872. Mrs. Jones was John McDougall's aunt, and John says they were "a pair of genuine nomads. This was but another of their moves."

¹³Perhaps the rough-and-ready west was not yet ready for stained glass windows in log churches. Not one of these gift windows has survived, and the Edmonton *Bulletin* of December 30, 1882, carried a mournful classified advertisement: "\$25 REWARD—The above reward will be paid for information that will lead to the conviction of the person or persons who lately broke the stained glass window in the Methodist Church."

6

Morleyville and the Blackfoot Mission

FROM 1869 until the arrival of the North West Mounted Police, as many as eight independent American trading posts were built in Canadian territory for the purpose of trading with the Blackfeet. There was no established authority to forbid them, and one of the signal contributions of the missionaries was to lay upon the conscience of the Christian people of Canada the conditions prevailing in the far west as a result of this illicit trade. McDougall protested the smuggling in of "thousands of gallons of alcohol by traders, destitute of all humanity." The alcohol in question was raw whisky, mixed or diluted to the trader's fancy. McDougall alleged that "scores, if not hundreds" of the Plains Indians had died in convulsions, as though killed by strychnine. This condition, together with the uncertainty attending the transfer of the country from Hudson's Bay Company charter to Dominion of Canada government, contributed to a general unrest.

It may seem strange that no mission work had hitherto been attempted among the Blackfeet. In the early days, however, the southern part of the Canadian prairies was virtually unknown to white men. The country had been opened for the exploitation of the fur-trade, and naturally travellers followed the waterways of the wooded north. Moreover, the reputation of

the Blackfeet in war made the open plains seem dangerous to the white man. Upon the advent of the Yankee traders, however, the Methodists immediately saw the urgency of establishing a mission in the south. It was determined that in the interests of safety this mission should be located in the foothills, where the friendly Mountain Stoney's would give some protection.

On April 29, 1873, the elder McDougall started for the Bow River to meet his son and together locate what would be the new Morleyville mission. The country through which they passed was totally unsettled, and after the first one hundred and fifty miles it was unknown even to the McDougalls despite their ten year's residence in the country. Reaching the Bow River, the party followed its beautiful valley upstream until they were within some fifteen miles of the mountains. Here they met a Mountain Stoney, the first human they had seen on the trip. This man took them at once to his camp where, the elder McDougall records, they found "42 tents, 73 men, 82 women, 58 boys, 71 girls, 199 horses and 24 colts, and 169 dogs." The faithful Stoney's were overjoyed to see their old missionary friends, whom they entertained royally in Chief Bear's Paw's tent at a supper of white swan's flesh.

Like all the McDougalls' trips, this was a missionary journey as well as an exploration. In the course of the services on Sunday, May 11, thirty-one children were baptized and one couple married. During the twenty-two days' trip 635 Stoney's and "upwards of 100 Crees" were visited, and "best of all, the presence of God has been strikingly manifested in our services."

David McDougall intended to settle at Morleyville. During the summer of 1873, therefore, while Mr. McDougall and John were away on the southern leg of the trip with Dr. Taylor, he removed from Victoria to Edmonton to make preparations for the move. The caravan for Morleyville set out from Edmonton on October 22. It must have been an impressive entourage: John and ten carts, a "double-waggon," and some loose horses and cows, and to manage these were himself, his wife driving a team, his eldest daughter Flora in the saddle driving the loose stock, and three native men helpers as outriders. David had an additional ten carts, and two white men and several English and

French mixed-blood families, these last with eight carts, making a total of twenty-nine vehicles, thirty-five persons, and stock.

It took them two days to get safely across the Saskatchewan River, by this time full of drifting ice. "A slight calamity" was the freezing of all their potatoes, which were being carried for provisions on the trip and for the winter. Travelling slowly south they lived largely on pemmican, varied with a few chickens and rabbits caught as they went. In due course, they met Chief Bear's Paw and his Mountain Stoneys. Moving into the valley of the Bow, they crossed the mouth of the Ghost River and camped in the valley for the Sabbath. These Mountain Stoneys were now parishioners. John found them relatively unspoiled, some of them wild young fellows fond of gambling and even of killing, and exhibiting a good deal of suspicion of the white man. In his approach to them he was greatly aided by an Indian named James Dixon.¹

After some exploration John and David selected a site in the timber about two miles north of the Bow River on the shore of a small lake. Here they felt they would be in a less exposed position until their permanent mission buildings could be erected. At the end of two weeks of intense activity a fort-like building had been erected, consisting of John's dwelling, another house and a storeroom, dwellings for the rest of the families, all forming a hollow square, with windows and openings facing into the square. With these finished sufficiently to move into, the next necessity was to go to the plains to hunt buffalo for food. In the next two months they were several times visited by both Blackfeet and Stoneys. At Christmas, feeling that their own people were secure, John and David left for Edmonton to attend and report to the District Meeting.

At the end of 1873 the elder McDougall made his annual report, commenting that since April, with the exception of one month, he had spent his time in the saddle. Prospects at Edmonton were bright.

Here we have a beautiful church, an attentive congregation, and a deeply interested school. Our country appointments are well attended, and best of all, a saving influence attends our services.

It seemed as if overnight the transition was taking place from a vast fur-trading empire virtually closed to settlement to a land open to settlers, for the chairman's next remarks seem to belong to a different era:

Since our return, the people have erected a comfortable shed—a very important item where a large part of the congregation have to come with teams from a distance. Since the railroad track was cut through the mountain pass, parties have arrived from British Columbia, and are now engaged in preparing homes in our neighbourhood. After years of hard toil at old Edmonton, the fruit begins to appear . . . in a word, in reviewing our two years' sojourn at Edmonton, we have abundant reason to thank God and take courage.

When the brothers John and David McDougall returned to future Morleyville from District Meeting, David brought his wife and child to their new southern home. It was a hard trip because the snow had deepened and the temperature stood near 40° below. Provisions were short and they were dependent upon buffalo. The Morleyville mission at first obtained supplies from an American trader named Conrad, who was located at the time on Sheep Creek. The "annual trip" for supplies was made to Fort Benton which, though it was only half the distance to Fort Garry, was much more dangerous to reach. The first of these trips began on April 6, 1874. Travelling through the whisky-trader country, they learned from Stoney Indians that the American traders had been trying to turn the Indians against the missionaries because of their opposition to the fire-water trade.

During the summer the Rev. George and Mrs. McDougall visited the new mission on the Bow preparatory to their trip east. After several excursions into the mountains, including Lake Minnewanka and the present site of Banff, the senior missionary, his wife, David and their party returned north to Edmonton to make the trip east. The father was pleased with the progress being made in the south. John had built a temporary church, covered it with bark, floored it with pine brush and installed

parchment windows for lighting; it was now serving large congregations of Blackfeet, Crees, Stoney and travellers. Meanwhile, materials were being gathered for the permanent buildings; lumber was hand sawn, and sashes, nails, etc., were brought from Fort Benton, Montana.

In midsummer George McDougall received an invitation for himself and Mrs. McDougall to come east on a year's furlough, after fourteen years' continuous service in the northwest. The six months immediately before had been the most trying time in his missionary experience. Since April 1, he had visited Victoria mission, Athabasca (100 miles north of Edmonton where there was no mission but a number of Stoney and other adherents), Morleyville, and then in July, Lac Ste. Anne. At this time of year the rivers and mountain streams were high, and the senior missionary had forded, rafted or swum thirty crossings. He still planned to visit Woodville; then, if missionary relief arrived from the east, he would be ready for his furlough. For the first time a new note appears in his correspondence. He was about fifty-four years of age and he commented, "For the first time I am nearly used up."²

George McDougall, as Chairman of the Methodist Saskatchewan District, could not well be away from his district without missionary relief to take his place. To find this relief, and send them into a territory over two thousand miles distant, was no simple problem for the missionary committee in Toronto. On July 5 a young probationer, W. R. Morrison, was ordained in the Elm Street Church and appointed to Edmonton House. With him went the Rev. Lewis Warner, a minister of forty-three years' standing, who had volunteered his services, and Miss E. A. Barrett, as previously noted, going to be teacher at White Fish Lake. The Rev. Henry M. Manning and his wife left Collingwood, Ontario, planning to join the party and to take over the station at White Fish Lake. What appeared to be a suitable plan of missionary supply miscarried, for two of the missionaries were detained at Winnipeg with illness and failed to reach their designated stations, and the Rev. L. Warner proved to be unsuited at his age for the exacting burdens of being acting Chairman in a district and among a people entirely new to him.

George McDougall arrived in Toronto in time for the first General Conference of the Methodist Church in Canada, meeting in Metropolitan Church on September 16, 1874. The veteran Indian missionary was heartily welcomed by the Conference, but a year's rest and recuperation from his labours was not to be. Records for the McDougalls' period of furlough are fragmentary, but we know that he was part of a deputation of four visiting the Methodist churches in the interests of missions. The others in the deputation were the Rev. A. Sutherland and Messrs. J. Macdonald and W. Clendinning. The *Canadian Methodist Magazine*, February, 1875, reported that they had visited "the principal circuits in the Maritime Provinces on behalf of the Missionary Society. The result of their labours is, that in every place the people responded so nobly that the amounts realized are largely in excess of all former years. Should other places in Ontario and Quebec respond in a similar manner, no doubt the income this year will amount to two hundred thousand dollars, which will be a noble sum but not too much for the wants of the Society."³ In the spring of 1875 George McDougall visited London, Glasgow and Edinburgh, and here too he spoke to gatherings on behalf of his Indian work.

Returning to the Saskatchewan country, he and his party, including Mr. Andrew Sibbald, a teacher-carpenter bound for Morleyville, left Toronto on July 9, 1875. The year away from his missionary district had been far from restful, but it had been, nevertheless, an encouragement to him. The Rev. Dr. W. M. Punshon, who as President of the Canada Conference had headed the deputation of missionary officials at the Winnipeg Conference of 1872, had returned to England and there had conferred with George McDougall and commended his work to the English brethren.

A new project was now being promoted by Mr. McDougall, "an Orphan House for the destitute children of the Plain tribes." In one of his last letters, dated Morleyville, Bow River, Rocky Mountains, December 23, 1875, he discussed with his Missionary Board his plans for this project. He had been unable, due to "the stringent state of the money market" and the changes in

church organization brought about by the union of the Methodist churches, to obtain a firm approval of the scheme. Doubting nothing, however, he had collected money for it and submitted a list of subscribers from Canada, and from London, Edinburgh and Glasgow, to a total of \$1,049.13, and he could have collected more had time allowed. The ladies of Montreal, Kingston, Toronto, and Minesing, Barrie circuit, had provided gifts of clothing; the Sunday School in Charlottetown, P.E.I., had volunteered to support the new Bow River mission to the extent of \$1,000.00 a year.⁴ The Chairman was anxious to proceed with his new project at the earliest possible moment. He had a "beautiful location" selected on the Playground River, west of Fort Macleod, and hoped the following spring to begin the erection of buildings for the orphanage and school. Almost all missionaries of all denominations active in the west had the idea of establishing orphanages. The McDougalls had sheltered orphan children in their own home throughout their missionary life. "Had we now accommodation for fifty scholars," wrote Mr. McDougall, "more than that number could be collected from the Blackfeet, while both the Crees and the Stoney have numbers of little orphans hanging on to their camps." It was a project dear to their hearts.

ERECTION OF THE MISSION CHURCH AT MORLEYVILLE

DURING his parents' absence in the east, John McDougall was hard at work consolidating his new position as missionary to "Morleyville, Bow River, and Blackfeet Indians." This involved spending the summer itinerating amongst the Blackfoot camps, becoming acquainted with them, and learning some of their language. He found the Blackfeet not as approachable as the Stoney and Cree and recognized the need to visit them often and become fluent in their language. The need for more missionary help pressed on him. He was still without a permanent teacher. In November, 1874, he was hard at work with three helpers hauling timber for a schoolhouse measuring 25 x 60 feet. A vicissitude of the west was the failure to arrive of a shipment of goods needed for winter wear and as payment for his workers.

These were needed in the autumn and winter and could not now be expected until the following summer. Meanwhile he continued chopping, hauling and sawing, while his missionary efforts attracted large congregations.

A great turning event was the arrival on the Old Man's River of the first contingent of the North West Mounted Police, under the command of Colonel J. F. Macleod. John visited the new police post which had been located on an island in the river, and wrote from it on December 2, 1874. He was well received and entertained by the commander of the force, and wrote that a practical missionary to serve the police, the whites and the Indians who would soon congregate there was an immediate necessity. The arrival of the police had resulted in the disappearance, at least for the time, of the prohibited whisky, and here at last were the peace officers so long asked for by the population of the plains. "Our way seems to brighten," John McDougall could write with evident satisfaction.

The season being far advanced when they arrived back from the east, the senior McDougall party resolved to winter at Morleyville, though the Chairman would have liked to move ahead with his own plans for his new mission to the Blackfeet. He reported in his letter of December 23, 1875, the state of the Saskatchewan missions on his return:

At Victoria I met Mr. Warner, twenty-three years ago my Chairman; then an energetic, efficient minister of Christ, now infirm and desiring to return to Ontario; but he will spend the winter among the large body of Indians and mixed-bloods collected here. On the 17th, at Edmonton, we met Mr. Manning, once an invalid, but braving the prairie atmosphere for three months, with his estimable wife driving their own team and pitching their tent, he is now strong for the Master's work.⁵ On the 22nd, we reached Morleyville. . . . A great change has come in fifteen months. Men of business are establishing themselves on the banks of the beautiful river. A stock raiser has arrived with several hundred cattle. On the very hills where two years ago I saw herds of buffalo, domestic cattle are grazing, requiring neither shelter nor fodder the year round. The mission house, 25 x 45, is approaching completion; the walls of a church, 27 x 47, are up, and a school has been built.⁶

I found my son earnestly at work on the mission buildings, and was gratified to find that a large amount of building material had been procured. The pressing want of the mission is the completion of the church, for which purpose at least two thousand boards, in addition to those already collected, will be required.⁷

To this date the Missionary Society had appropriated over nine hundred dollars for the Morleyville mission, but the Chairman estimated that the church would cost at least two thousand dollars, and that further delay would seriously affect the work of the mission. At least six hundred Indians were anticipating worshipping the "Great Spirit" in the new House of Prayer. With such a limited budget available for the establishment of these new premises and for the mission staff salaries, it appeared impossible to employ workmen for the construction except as men could be engaged to saw lumber in return for the clothing provided by the Kingston ladies. The obvious solution was to build the buildings themselves, and this they proceeded to do. "John," wrote his father, "has done nobly, but must have more help. Bro. Sibbald is a carpenter, and I am an old hand at building and no navvies ever worked harder than we have for the last two months. I hope by spring we shall have a respectable church ready for use. Here we have the largest native congregation that I have yet seen, and my duty is (D.V.) at least for the next three months to work at the bench."

In a letter from Morleyville, December 27, John McDougall related that he and his father, together with the veteran Stoney interpreter James Dixon, had made an exploratory trip south through the Porcupine Hills to ascertain whether a waggon road could be found connecting Morleyville and the new mission to be established on the valley of the Playground River, to visit the Mounted Police and to procure winter supplies from the American traders. Thinking about the hard work before them in completing the church, John remarked:

In the eyes of some people, it may not appear very dignified for the Chairman of the District, the missionary, and the school-master to lay aside their books and take hold of the axe and

saw. On this point we are not very anxious. Paul was a tent-maker, and the majority of our party are carpenters, and the Lord being our helper we shall build a church that will be no disgrace to the beautiful Morleyville . . . we are not discouraged, the Lord has owned our humble labours in the past, and we are full of hope for the future.⁸

They regarded the establishment of the new mission on the Playground River as mandatory. The government was expected to make treaty with the Blackfoot Indians, businessmen and settlers were rushing into the country, and it appeared likely that Fort Macleod would become the political centre. John knew how anxious his father was to proceed with this new establishment. "I sincerely hope father will be able to carry out his long-cherished enterprise, and establish an asylum, not only for orphan children but also a home for the aged and blind, etc. These are truly objects of charity, especially among the Indians."

Of this period John reported, "Father, as usual, has never had an idle day since he came back—working out of doors and in the house, writing, praying, preaching. He has gone down to the Elbow post and High River."⁹

DEATH ON THE PLAINS

BY THE MIDDLE of January, 1876, the weather was very cold, the buffalo were far out on the plains, and the Morleyville mission was running short of food. George McDougall returned to the mission, bringing word that the buffalo were migrating westward and that the time was favourable for a hunt. Preparations were made, and when an expected assistant did not arrive the father offered to go along in his stead. It proved to be his last journey. On February 11, John reported to the Missionary Committee as follows:

It is my painful duty to inform you of the sudden taking away from us of our dear father. Yesterday we laid his mortal remains in the grave, but, glory be to God, we did it in sure and certain hope of a glorious resurrection. He died in Missionary harness.

The circumstances connected with his loss are very painful. On the 18th of January father and I left home, as we thought, for a few days, to procure meat for our families and those with us.

No men were to be had; and father, sooner than have me go alone with comparatively no help, and seeing the necessity of the case, volunteered to go. Everything proceeded well and prosperously until the night of the 24th, when, as we were nearing our camp—it may have been nine, or perhaps ten o'clock—father said he would go on to the tent. The distance was not more than two miles, if that. I, never dreaming anything, told him I thought he had better as I could get on with the sleds without help. Accordingly he started. As I saw him disappear in the night, going as he was, right in the direction of our tent, I little thought I would never again in this life behold his face; and yet such was the case. He never reached the tent. We fired guns; we searched the country all around; went home to see if he had not gone there; then to the Elbow post, which was nearer than home; kind friends turned out; but all in vain, we could not find him. We then secured fresh supplies, and thus organized commenced afresh. Everyone sympathized; everyone was willing to help; but not until the fourteenth day was his lifeless body found. You may imagine the feeling of our hearts as my brother David and I stood over the frozen body of our dear father. I had hoped against hope. It seemed as if I could not give him up, he seemed to be needed so much at this time.

What a mysterious Providence! Truly "God's ways are not our ways!" We are comforted with the thought that with him "all is well." He evidently was conscious at the last, for he had laid himself out. His position when found was as if some kind hand had performed the last office of arranging his body for the burial.

Heroic to the last! May the Lord pardon us for sorrowing so deeply for him whom we loved.

Dear mother has been wonderfully sustained under this sad stroke. Our earnest prayer is that it may be sanctified to the good of all our family. *Pray for us.*

This will cause great change; but it will no doubt be all right, it is the Lord's work and will go on (D.V.) I will go over to Edmonton and confer with Brother Manning about what had better be done for this next summer. May the Lord direct in all things.¹⁰

George McDougall's disappearance and death were considered to be a mystery at the time. Afterwards, wrote Mrs. McDougall in a letter to her mother, "A boy was found who said he had seen a white man on a horse Tuesday afternoon riding round in a circle, then getting off, kneeling down, and getting on his horse

again. Saturday the horse came to a tent, near the road homeward, without any saddle."¹¹ The body was found by accident on the 6th of February about 10 miles from the point where John had last seen him.¹² At the time there seemed to be no clue to the solving of the mystery. Bearing the body back to Morleyville, they had it examined by their mission teacher, Dr. George Verey, but he was unable to determine the cause of death. On reflection, John concluded: "My own theory is, that some disease affecting either his heart or brain, so acted upon him that for the time being he was unconscious of his surroundings; otherwise, I cannot explain his being lost."¹³

The funeral was held on February 10, 1876, the burial being in the mission cemetery north of the old church, where the grave may still be seen. John McDougall wrote: "It was a sorrowful company that bore his remains to the grave. With trembling utterance we laid him in it, in sure and certain hope of a glorious resurrection. His work is finished, but not forgotten, nor yet will it be. A faithful son, a true husband, a fond and righteous parent, a real patriot, a faithful missionary, such was father."

REFERENCES

¹Spelled variously "Dickson." He had received his English name from the Rev. Robt. Rundle, and is an excellent example of how the McDougalls were able to build on the work of earlier missionaries. Dixon must have been quite a remarkable interpreter: "James was a linguist, had the Cree and Stoney equally well, and could speak Kootenay and Blackfoot also very well" and translated with a fine feeling.

²George M. McDougall, p. 194.

³In Ontario they visited London, St. Thomas, Woodstock, Hamilton, Toronto, Belleville, Kingston, Ottawa, Port Hope, Cobourg, Guelph and other towns, addressing a series of missionary anniversary meetings. (*Missionary Notices*, series 3, p. 16.)

At a missionary meeting held in Brockville George McDougall spoke, and an address was also given by W. J. Christie, Esq., Chief Factor for the Hudson's Bay Company at Fort Edmonton 1860-1868. This address is fully reported in *Missionary Notices*, series 3, pp. 48-50. He exemplifies the official Hudson's Bay policy in paying tribute to the work of the several denominations, including the Methodists, the Roman Catholics and the Anglican Church Missionary Society.

At the end of 1875, according to the *Annual Report of the 51st Anniversary* of the Methodist Missionary Society of Canada, 30,070 communicant members were reported, 383 missions, 392 missionaries, and including missionaries, teachers, interpreters and native assistants, the Missionary Department had a paid agency of 466. The income from all sources for 1875 was \$147,168.00 and the expenditure was \$185,286.00.

⁴*Missionary Notices*, series 3, p. 109 ff.; Sanderson, *op. cit.*, p. 309.

⁵The Rev. H. M. Manning had been invalided at Winnipeg on his way west, and fears had been expressed that he lacked sufficient strength for the work, but the Rev. George Young reported that "the pure bracing atmosphere of the western Plains had greatly improved his physical vigour." (*Missionary Notices*, series 3, p. 86.)

⁶Sanderson, *op. cit.*, p. 321.

⁷*Missionary Notices*, Series 3, p. 110.

⁸*Ibid.*, pp. 112, 113.

⁹*Annual Report*, p. xvi. "Elbow Post" was the early name for Calgary.

¹⁰*Missionary Notices*, series 3, pp. 122, 123.

¹¹Sanderson, *op. cit.*, p. 323.

¹²Near Nose Creek, north of Calgary. A pile of stones was heaped at the place at the time to identify the spot, and the Province of Alberta plans to erect in 1960 a cairn and plaque to mark it permanently.

¹³*George M. McDougall*, p. 216. Modern medical opinion would bear out John's theory, says M. A. R. Young, M.D., F.R.C.S.(C), F.A.C.S.: "It seems not unreasonable to suggest that George McDougall came to his death as a result of coronary heart disease. His age, his more than usual physical activities for the last two or three days of his life, and the fact that he remarked in one of his letters over a year before this that he was not able to withstand the hardships as well as he once did, all point to a cardiac death."

A bit of family tradition also supports this supposition. Mrs. Lillian Graham, daughter of John McDougall, recalls her mother seeing George McDougall leaning against the stable the day before the hunt began, and admitting to a severe chest pain. "Don't tell John," he said, "it will go away." The famous snowstorm that impeded the search did not begin until some thirty hours after Mr. McDougall disappeared.

7

Missionaries in a Transition Period—An Appraisal

IN MANY WAYS a great gulf is fixed between our age and that of the McDougalls. Applied science has radically altered our mode of life; the political doctrine of the self-determination of the peoples has rendered the great colonial empires obsolete; Biblical criticism and theology have shifted their ground and emphases. The Reverends George and John McDougall with a combined ministry from 1850 to the end of 1916 of about seventy-five years bestrode the great transition period of the Canadian west. In 1850 Rupert's Land was controlled as a monopolistic fur-trading empire administered by a private company. By 1916 the west had passed through a series of political developments: the formation of the province of Manitoba in 1870; the admission of British Columbia as a province in 1871; and of Saskatchewan and Alberta in 1905. There had also been a series of great social movements. Joseph Howe of Nova Scotia, journalist, politician and orator, was in his time nearly alone in his vision of the development of the Canadian west. His great speech delivered at Mason's Hall, Halifax, on May 15, 1851, was far in advance of his time. In it he said, speaking of the development of railroads in one part of Canada and beyond:

I am neither a prophet, nor the son of a prophet, yet I will venture to predict that in five years we shall make the journey hence to Quebec and Montreal, and home through Portland and St. John, by rail; and I believe that many in this room will live to hear the whistle of the steam engine in the passes of the Rocky Mountains, and to make the journey from Halifax to the Pacific in five or six days. With such objects in view—with the means before us to open up one thousand miles of this noble territory; to increase its resources and lay bare its treasures, surely all petty jealousies and personal rivalries should stand rebuked; all minor questions of mere local interest should give way.¹

Over the years from 1850 until 1869 and 1870, when negotiations between the Canadian government and the Hudson's Bay Company were entered into for the surrender of the territory to the Dominion of Canada, there was comparatively little popular interest on the part of Canadians in this vast unknown land as a possible area of settlement. These years were occupied with the problems of the establishing of responsible government in the provinces and of negotiating the Confederation which culminated in 1867. But time was not standing still. There came the discovery of gold in the Cariboo with the resultant gold rush beginning in 1857 bringing thousands of people of all descriptions into interior British Columbia. Although most of these came up the Pacific coast from the goldfields of California, some came across southern Alberta from the western States, and others like the "Overlanders of 1862" came from Canada by way of the Red River Settlement, Edmonton and the Yellowhead Pass. The ebb and flow of these miners across the west before the establishment of civil law and justice aggravated the Indian unrest. In 1869 and 1870 occurred the first North-West Rebellion at the Red River settlement arising from the failure of the Dominion government to communicate its plans for land settlement to the settlers already in possession of land. Unwisely, land surveyors were sent into the country before the original rights of the Indians to their land had been extinguished by treaty. Following the disappearance of the buffalo the Indians and mixed-bloods experienced varying degrees of starvation, and they could not quell overnight the instinct to wander and seek food as they and

their ancestors had done for centuries. The advance of the Canadian Pacific Railway across the prairies became a symbol of their loss of freedom and in 1885 trouble flared up again with hostilities at Batoche, St. Laurent and Duck Lake. It is probable that the strong influence of Father Lacombe and the Reverends George and John McDougall amongst the Blackfeet, Stoney and Crees prevented their joining the rebellion.²

The railway reached Winnipeg in 1879, Brandon in 1881, Moosomin in 1882, and Calgary in 1883. The homestead rush began in 1878, and colonization companies in the 1880's vigorously promoted land settlement. Under the Hon. Clifford Sifton, who became Minister of the Interior for the Dominion Government in 1896, large-scale immigration took place. "The population of the Dominion increased from 4,833,239 in 1891 to 5,371,315 in 1901, and by 1911 it had reached 7,204,838."³

Throughout this period of major social revolution the McDougalls were unceasing prophets and promoters of the west and as such occupy a significant and permanent place in the history of the development of northwestern Canada. This chapter will attempt to summarize the contribution that these early missionaries made to the social and religious life of the west.

LAYING THE FOUNDATIONS OF THE PROTESTANT CHURCH IN THE NORTHWEST

THE MCDUGALLS were not the earliest Protestant missionaries in the Hudson's Bay Territory. They were preceded at Norway House by James Evans and his successors, and in the far west by Robert Rundle, Thomas Woolsey and Henry Steinhaur. But whereas Evans had had a more stable group of Indians with whom to work, they being settled around Norway House because of employment in the Hudson's Bay Company river transportation system, the nomadic life of the Plains Indians had dictated an itinerant ministry to Rundle and Woolsey. Rundle foresaw the necessity of the Indians adopting a change in their life from the uncertainty forced on them by the hunt and had made a beginning in teaching the Indians agriculture. But as long as the plains teemed with buffalo, such a policy was unlikely to

succeed. Steinhaur also foresaw this change and at his station at White Fish Lake had begun an agricultural settlement some six years before the McDougalls arrived for settlement. It fell to the Rev. George McDougall, as the first resident chairman in the new Methodist district stretching from Lake Winnipeg and Rainy River through to the Rocky Mountains, to advance the organization of the church from an itinerancy carried on by lone and practically independent missionaries to the next stage, that of mission stations or settled parishes. By 1868 the single vast district of which he had been made chairman in 1860 had become two: the Red River District under the chairmanship of the Rev. George Young and his own Saskatchewan District.

George McDougall's primary concern was with the Indian work. This concern determined the location of his first station at Victoria (now Pakan), a place resorted to by the Cree Indians. Having become firmly established there, he sent his son John during the winter of 1864 and spring of 1865 to reopen the old Rundle-Sinclair mission to the Stoneys at Pigeon Lake. This also was conceived and carried on as an Indian mission. The growing importance of Edmonton demanded a settled church, and this alone of the four stations established during the joint ministry of George and John McDougall was chiefly a white church. The long cherished extension of their work into the southern parts of the region was accomplished in 1873 by the beginnings at Morleyville, which was intended to serve both the Stoneys and the Blackfeet. When, in practice, it proved too far west to serve the Blackfeet, a new mission in the country west of Macleod was being planned by the chairman at the time of his death. Of these stations Edmonton and Morley still flourish, while Pakan and Woodville, being located away from modern centres of population, are no longer active churches.

Hand in hand with the beginning of religious services and preaching of the gospel went the establishment of schools for the education of both children and adults. While the basic subjects of reading, writing and arithmetic were taught, the curriculum was strongly religious in its flavour, including the singing of hymns and the reading of the Christian scriptures. The

McDougalls introduced the use of lay school teachers very early in their work at Victoria, and were among the first to do so in the present Province of Alberta. This heritage of education as a concern of the church continued on through the years and with the establishment in Edmonton in 1903 of Alberta College situated on a part of the former McDougall mission property designated by the McDougalls to be used for this purpose.

Another early beginning was the establishment at Victoria mission of the hospital later moved to Smoky Lake. This would seem to be the beginning of The United Church of Canada's present policy of maintaining hospitals only in the stage of pioneer development, later turning them over to public authorities as soon as municipalities are prepared to assume their operation.

Another major contribution of the McDougalls which may easily be overlooked was their consistent policy of recruiting additional ministerial and lay help to strengthen and expand the work. George McDougall pleaded for extra help both by letter and by personal visit. He was successful in obtaining major reinforcements in 1868 when the Rev. Peter Campbell and the Snyder brothers returned with him to the Saskatchewan, and the Rev. George Young and the Rev. E. R. Young came into the Red River. Additional help was supplied in 1874, when the Rev. H. M. Manning came to Edmonton and Miss E. A. Barrett to White Fish Lake, and in 1875 when the lay assistants, Messrs. Inkster and Andrew Sibbald, came to Morleyville. After George McDougall's death this recruiting activity was continued by John, who, on his speaking tours across Canada, was responsible for bringing many young ministers to the far west.

Still another facet of the McDougalls' missionary work might be called today "social service": the care of numerous Indian orphans, first in their own homes and later in an orphanage at Morley, and the care and hospitality of numerous travellers, some of them indigent and sick. This care usually fell on the McDougall women. There being no public authority to assume this welfare work, the missions performed it.⁴

The McDougalls' friendly attitude toward the Indians was notable in a period in which there was much anti-Indian propaganda, particularly in the United States. Their missionary motivation was mingled with patriotic sentiments. The following are examples of John's statements of their purpose: "We are here to preach and live loyalty to God and country, to make men strong and true; therefore, we worry along . . . in order that the making of the man, the building of the citizen, may go on and the world be made better."⁵ "We want to do them [i.e. the Indians gathered on the plains in the summer of 1869] good in three direct ways—Christianizing, educating, civilizing. Some say civilize first, but our experience is that this is not, nor yet can it be, so great an agency for permanent civilization as Christianity, therefore we hope to begin on sure foundations."⁶ Their approach to the Indians was simply to befriend them.

Some good folk, as also some merely inquisitive people, have often said to us, "How did you win the confidence and faith of these native tribes?" Today's experience is in part the answer. We companioned them in sorrow and in joy, in fasting and in feasting, in peace and in war; were in all things like them, without in any sense compromising either principle or manliness. We were nomads or permanents, as our work needed. We hunted and trapped and fished, and engaged in all manner of athletics, foot races, horse races, anything for real fun and common brotherhood. Thus we found out men, and these in turn saw us and read us as a book, until they knew that on every page of our life there was written friendship and the true desire to help them. More than this, they saw we believed in them, and at last they grew to believe most heartily in us.⁷

One might say that the McDougalls' was a muscular faith. Neither father nor son had the advantage of much academic training. Neither did they have opportunity or time for much reading, had books been available. They lived their creed, and showed by example as much as by precept their understanding of the Christian faith. Though George McDougall wrote many letters on practical subjects, he wrote no books, and no sermon of his is known to survive. Only one of John McDougall's sermons is known to the writer, "The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon."⁸ In later years John published his reminiscences,

and in 1888, in co-operation with the Rev. E. B. Glass, he published a *Primer and Language Lessons* in Cree and English and a *Cree Handbook* in syllabic. In 1899 he was one of a committee under the Archbishop of Rupert's Land to revise the 1862-1873 Cree translation of the *Bible* from the Swampy Cree dialect to Plain Cree. John McDougall's part in this was the revision of the Pentateuch.

PATRIOTS AND PROMOTERS OF THE WEST

ALL MISSIONARIES in the North West Territories had the advantage of doing their work against the background of the humane and peaceful policy pursued for nearly two hundred years by the Hudson's Bay Company, but this policy had had little effect upon the tribal warfare traditionally carried on amongst the Indians. The McDougalls conceived their role to be first to "Christianize" and then to "civilize," to be evangelists, peace-makers and upholders of law and order. From the very beginning George McDougall had told the Indians that tribal warfare must be abolished, and that it was "the business of himself and brethren to teach and prepare them for the change which was bound to come."

The McDougalls steadily held before the conscience of whoever would listen the necessity of an early settlement by the government with the Plains tribes. To this end they led the Indians under their oversight to petition for such a settlement before the end of 1869. Had these repeated pleas been listened to and acted upon, it is more than a probability that the rebellions of 1870 and 1885, with their loss of life, anxiety, and great financial cost to the country would have been avoided. But even without government support, the McDougalls made on their own initiative many journeys amongst the Indians with the object of keeping them loyal and persuading them that the government would, in time, deal justly and fairly with them. On numerous later occasions, in 1871, 1874, 1875 and 1885, the McDougalls conducted official visitations amongst the Indians at the request of the Dominion government. These visitations had much to do with the peaceful entry of the North West Mounted Police into

the country in the fall of 1874. Their coming had been announced to the Indians by John McDougall in the summer of 1874 at the request of the government. John explained "the full purpose" of their coming and he thus became, as he said, the "John the Baptist" of the new regime they inaugurated.⁹

The part that the Christian missionaries played in this sudden transformation from a lawless territory belonging to aboriginal tribes, traditionally at war with one another and helpless before the rapacity of white traders bent on profit through the sale of fire-water, into a peaceful country newly opened to civilized settlement seems next to miraculous. The ease of the transition cannot be accounted for entirely by the entry of a small force of police located at three widely separated posts, two in the south (Fort Walsh and Elbow Post), and one further north near Edmonton (Fort Saskatchewan), hundreds of miles apart. Both George and John McDougall collaborated closely with the police, interpreting their role to the Indians and even to the American traders, and John gave his co-operation to the police in reporting crime when necessary. Both missionaries had a high opinion of Col. J. F. Macleod, and the Indians for their part testified to their satisfaction with the new regime on the occasion of the signing of Treaty No. 7. To the present time few secular historians have given due weight to the part played by the missionaries in preparing the way for the coming of civil law. John McDougall's assessment of their own part in it seems no more than correct:

Thus, without a shot being fired, government was established simultaneously at Edmonton in the North, and at Macleod in the South. A mere handful of men, unused to this wilderness life, "tenderfeet" for the most part, had come across the plains of the southern North-West Territories, and another company had taken the old trail up the Saskatchewan, and not a man had said them nay, just because the whole country was tired of tribal war and constant lawlessness, and was looking and longing for this change which was now brought about by the advent of the representatives of government and order. I claim that the missionary of the Gospel of Jesus Christ had more to do with the peaceful occupation of this immense land than any other man. He was the real forerunner in this case. In buffalo and moose-skin lodges, in the centres of great encampments, beside many

campfires, during countless conversations as thousands of miles across country were being traversed, he glorified the law, he extolled order, he preached forever peace and loyalty to good government, and thus the minds of the people were prepared and waiting for this day we now beheld.¹⁰

George McDougall had also been a constant protagonist for the rights of the Indians, and the necessity for treaties being made with them, years before his pleas issued in government action. In the summer of 1875, reaching Winnipeg on his way back to the Saskatchewan after his year's furlough, he was requested by the Hon. Alexander Morris, Lieutenant-Governor of Manitoba and the North-West, to visit as many Indian camps as possible in the interests of the government. The Minister of the Interior, the Hon. David Mills, in his report for the year 1876, thus alluded to Mr. McDougall's service:

The Rev. George McDougall, who had been resident as a missionary amongst these Indians for upwards of fourteen years, and who possessed great influence over them, was selected by his Honour to convey this intelligence to the Indians, a task which he performed with great fidelity and success: being able to report on his return that although he found the feeling of discontent had been very general among the Indian tribes, he had been enabled entirely to remove it by his assurance of the proposed negotiations during the coming year.¹¹

According to a letter he wrote to Richard Hardisty from Rat Creek on the 11th of August, 1875, it was George McDougall who arranged for Treaty No. 6 to be signed by Alexander Morris with the Indians at Fort Carlton on August 18, 1876, and later at Fort Pitt. When the Blackfeet signed Treaty No. 7 in 1877 at Blackfoot Crossing on the Bow River, John McDougall was one of the signatories and advisers to the Indians.

To promote the west and its settlement was such a ruling passion with John McDougall that he appended an epilogue "Manitoba and the North-West" to his earliest (1888) published book, the biography of his father, setting forth his evaluation of the west's resources under the headings, size, climate, soil, pasture, water, minerals, timber, appearance, and his belief "in the capability of this part of our great Dominion for the maintenance

of a large population.”¹² His published memoirs in five volumes, two novels and a large number of occasional articles in magazines and newspapers all extolled the west. His intimate knowledge of its geography and people were recognized when he was appointed Commissioner to the Doukhobors and Special Commissioner to the Indians by the Dominion Government. In this capacity he visited hundreds of reserves throughout the west, listening to tribal councils and individual Indians and relaying their grievances and requests to the government. John McDougall was much in demand as a public speaker, and travelled from coast to coast with but one subject, said John Maclean, “The gospel of Jesus Christ and the great North-West.”¹³

EARLY DEVELOPMENT OF AGRICULTURE

EARLY EXPERIMENTS in agriculture had been carried on in the Canadian West by the Selkirk Settlers in the Red River Settlement from 1811 onwards, and in almost all of the Hudson's Bay and North West Company's posts. Alexander Ross, in the employ of the Hudson's Bay Company until 1821, wrote in later years two books on the fur trade and a history called the *Red River Settlement*. Ross described farming activities at the various posts as he observed them in a trip he made across the Rockies with the Columbian Brigade previous to 1839. Potatoes, cabbage and other vegetables were grown as far north as Fort Wedderburn on Lake Athabasca. At Edmonton there were “two large parks for raising grain, and, the soil being good, it produces large crops of barley and potatoes; but the spring and fall frosts prove injurious to wheat, which, in consequence, seldom comes to maturity.”¹⁴ At Cumberland House Ross noted the increase of agriculture as furs and animals decreased, and in addition to cultivated fields, domestic cattle from Red River had been introduced. Franklin had noted in 1820 five acres under cultivation at Fort Carlton producing wheat, barley, oats and potatoes. By 1830 Governor Simpson had ordered each chief factor to report “a list of Cattle and other Livestock and the number of Acres in Cultivation and quantity of seed sown for the next Crop and quantity reaped the preceding Summer.”¹⁵

The governor considered such home-grown produce as insurance against possible famine should the hunt or the Indians fail to produce sufficiently.

The missionaries picked up this agricultural endeavour and produced not only grain crops, vegetables, domestic chickens and cattle for their own use, but also taught the arts of agriculture to the Indians. The Rev. A. Thibault, O.M.I., began agriculture at his mission at Lac Ste. Anne in 1843, and the Rev. Albert Lacombe, O.M.I., continued this pursuit at St. Albert from 1861 on. The Rev. Robert Rundle had made his beginning with Benjamin Sinclair as agriculturalist at Pigeon Lake, and these efforts were continued by the latter and the Rev. Henry Steinhaur at White Fish Lake from 1857 on. One of George McDougall's prime concerns on his exploratory trip of 1862 was the suitability of the Saskatchewan country for agriculture. He was delighted to be able to report, under date August 15, 1862: "Our journey from Fort Pitt was made in three days, through a country equal to the best part of Canada for agriculture—a black loam on strong clay, producing the richest grass, feeding countless herds of buffalo; and water power without limit" and of White Fish Lake Mission: "The little fields of barley, wheat, potatoes and turnips look well."¹⁶ The McDougalls continued this work, first at Victoria, where preparatory work was done at the site in the fall of 1862 even before the arrival of the family, and again extensively by John at Woodville after the re-establishment of this station in 1864. His agricultural beginnings there sound like the first farmers' short course in the territory: "We had ploughed and fenced a small field and partly planted it, for the seed we had was distributed to so many Indians, and went into so many fields, that our own share was a small one. However, the beginning of such a life was made up by all who came to us. A few potato cuttings and a thimbleful of turnip seed, these were the commencement of another kind of evolution. How many generations of persistent effort to make farmers of these men we did not then take time to estimate—'sufficient unto the day', etc. We had made a beginning."¹⁷ In 1864, also, John McDougall made an epic trip to Winnipeg, bringing back with him overland the

nucleus of their dairy herd—perhaps the first such animals to reach the present province of Alberta.

Another contribution of the McDougall family has been their contemporary accounts, important not only for their records of significant events but also for the vivid picture they have left us of day-to-day life in the Canadian west. In John McDougall's books these take a simple narrative form, and are faithful to conditions as they actually were.

SUCCESS AMONG THE INDIANS

THE QUESTION may naturally be asked, Was this missionary effort successful? There can be no doubt that it was, and results of early missionary labour by all denominations can be seen to this day. The work of Robert Rundle, Thomas Woolsey, Henry B. Steinhaur and the McDougalls has never been forgotten by the Indians. Many outstanding examples might be cited. Although Maskepetoon, in his youth a "prince among horse thieves" who made war a pastime, resisted Christianity at first as being contrary to all his former habits, he was at last won when he was able to read the New Testament for himself in his own language, and became the McDougalls' powerful ally. The Mountain Stoney, especially, made "religion a business." A new attitude towards the old law of blood revenge was illustrated when a camp of Stoney was attacked by a large war party of Crees while observing evening worship in their tents. The Crees fired a fusilade into the tents, but because so many of the Stoney were on their knees the shots passed over their heads. The Crees were repulsed, but when the Stoney returned to their tents they discovered that their aged patriarch, "The Man Without a Hole in His Ear," the father of Mark and George Ear, had been killed. He had died from a single shot in a vital organ while praying. The old custom would have demanded immediate revenge. But these Stoney were Christians, and, said John McDougall, "they felt that they must respect his act and faith and not take revenge. Surely this was strong evidence of a great change in the feelings of the Indians, bred as they have been to retaliation and deep hatred of their foes."¹⁸

The work of evangelism went steadily on so that by 1874 John McDougall could claim the following personages as his friends:

Among the Blackfeet we won over Bull Elk, and Eagle Ribs, and Bear's Child, and Big Plume, and Old Sun, and we had already . . . gained the confidence of Crowfoot, the head chief; and now these men counted us as of themselves. Then, among the Bloods, we won over Rainy Chief, and Iron Pipe . . . then, among the Sarcees, there was great big Bull Head, who claimed me as a brother . . . among the Stoney, there were Bear's Paw, and Cheneka, and Jacob. These were the chiefs of the Mountain and Wood Stoney, and were as our own brethren; and thus our work went on with great encouragement.¹⁹

The Rev. George McDougall often pointed to the religious faith of his people at death as the sign that "the great object of missions" had been accomplished. "They died in the Lord," he wrote in describing the deaths in 1873 of several of his faithful people at Edmonton. Margaret Whitford, a Flathead trained by Jesuits in British Columbia, was "soundly converted" at Victoria mission and was probably the first of her tribe to embrace the Protestant faith. Mr. McDougall described her as a consistent Christian. Her body was brought over two hundred miles by her friends in order that she might receive a Christian burial. Sophia Bird, a native woman who was brought up in the family of Dr. Bunn of Red River, became a Christian and at her death, said George McDougall, "she literally preached Christ with her latest breath . . . to God we ascribe the glory."²⁰

The Rev. George M. Grant, observing the work of the McDougalls at Victoria Mission in 1872, gave his own independent estimate of its success:

We had seen enough today to convince us, more than all the arguments in the world, that missionary labour among the Indians is a reality, and that the positive language on the other side is the language of ignorance, self-interest, or downright opposition to the Gospel. The aims of traders and missionaries with regard to the Indians are different; the former wish that they should continue hunters, the latter that they should take to steady employment. It is not wonderful then that some traders should feel annoyed at what they regard as a steady working against their interests. But, as the Indian has no chance

of existence except by conforming to civilized ways, the sooner that the Government or the Christian people awake to the necessity of establishing schools among every tribe the better. Little can be done with the old, and it may be two or three generations before old habits among a people are changed; but by always taking hold of the young, the work can be done. A mission without schools is a mistake, almost a crime. And the Methodists deserve the praise of having seen and vigorously acted on this, and they can point to visible proofs of success in their Indian missions.²¹

Forty-one years of fruitful ministry were left to John McDougall after the death of his revered father. A new era was dawning on that January day in 1876 when the senior McDougall laid himself out to die on the plain alone, having finished his course. That subsequent era is properly the subject of another study still to be made.

Of John, prophet, pioneer, and courageous missionary friend of the Indian, Dr. George W. Kerby said:

He found the Indian in paganism and savagery—he left him enjoying the privileges of civilization.

He found the West as “No man’s land,” he left it “Every man’s land,” the land for the crowd.

He found the West the home of the wild buffalo—he left it the home of a new federation of races.

He found the West without schools, churches or government—he left it with education, government and religion as well organized as anywhere on the Continent.

He found the West without ideals, without purpose, without conscious sense of opportunity or responsibility—he left it alive and alert with the sentiments of Empire and the thoughts of the great new Christian Democracy struggling for a place in the life of the people.²²

The missionary McDougall families by their religious zeal, single-mindedness and willingness to undergo any hardship with sublime fortitude made a heroic beginning for the church in northwest Canada. They have left all Christians and Canadians a priceless heritage of faithfulness and love. Their labours were truly apostolic, for to them might be applied quite literally the words of the Apostle Paul about himself:

In journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils of mine own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness. . . .

In weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness.

Beside those things that are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the churches. (II Corinthians 11:26-28)

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²A letter from T. Bland Strange, Major-General commanding Alberta Forces dated June 18, 1885, to Dr. Jas. Woodsworth, President, Manitoba Conference, Methodist Church, paying tribute to John McDougall's services as guide, scout, chaplain and peace-maker among the "turbulent Indians" during the Riel Rebellion, is quoted in full in J. Maclean, *McDougall of Alberta*, pp. 268, 269.

³G. MacEwan, *Between the Red and the Rockies*, Toronto, University of Toronto Press, 1952, p. 95.

⁴One such was a tragi-comic figure, Mr. O'Byrne, whose history is given by Dr. Cheadle in his *Journal*, Ottawa, Graphic Publishers Ltd., 1931, p. 142 ff. He was a ne'er-do-well, who sought employment as a teacher with the Anglicans unsuccessfully in Red River in 1862, travelled on with the Overlanders, but was left stranded by them in Fort Carlton; was brought to Edmonton by Hardisty of the H.B.C., for which Governor Dallas made Mr. Hardisty pay £16 10. O'Byrne found refuge with Rev. T. Woolsey and John McDougall, as the latter related in *Forest, Lake and Prairie*, chapter 41. John said he "was a victim of the liquor curse." Cheadle described him as "the most helpless fellow in the world," timorous, and the butt of numerous practical jokes.

⁵*In the Days of the Red River Rebellion*, pp. 13, 14.

⁶*Ibid.*, p. 71.

⁷*Ibid.*, p. 25.

⁸Of this sermon John said in *On Western Trails in the Early Seventies*, pp. 243, 244: "While on this visit [i.e., a visit to Fort Macleod in March, 1875] I held the first Protestant service in the history of this part of the country. The police paraded, and the largest room in the barracks was crowded. I preached to this congregation from the words contained in Gideon's battle-cry, 'The sword of the Lord and of Gideon'—'Man in association with God'.

"I do not know now just how I handled my subject; but many a time since, someone who was there that Sabbath morning in March, 1875, has spoken to me concerning the significance of that service, and quoted my text, and said, 'We will never forget the occasion.' After our last rebellion, in 1885, some fourteen years after this first service, I preached from the same text to a congregation in the town of Macleod, under very different conditions, and a goodly number of the police were present, these being led by my old friend, Col. Steele, now of Strathcona Horse and South African fame."

A copy of this unpublished sermon is in the possession of John McDougall's daughter, Mrs. J. E. Graham, of Calgary.

⁹*On Western Trails in the Early Seventies*, pp. 174-192.

¹⁰*Ibid.*, pp. 215, 216.

¹¹Cited by A. Morris, *The Treaties of Canada with the Indians of Manitoba and the North-West Territories*, p. 172. Morris also gives George McDougall's report to him, dated October 23, 1875, from Morleyville, stating his findings in visiting practically all the Plains tribes, an estimated 3,976 Indians.

¹²J. McDougall, *George M. McDougall*, pp. 231-242.

¹³On one of these trips in 1886 he took Chief Samson, Chief Pakan, Robert B. Steinhaur, then an Arts student at Victoria College, Cobourg, and Chief Jonas Big Stoney on a two-months' speaking tour of Manitoba and Ontario. They spoke in Victoria Hall, Winnipeg, and at the General Conference of the Methodist Church in Toronto; they interviewed the government in Ottawa, spoke in Cobourg, Portage la Prairie, Brandon and Regina. The speeches made in Winnipeg by McDougall, Pakan, Big Stoney and Samson are given by John Maclean in *McDougall of Alberta*, pp. 161-168. Maclean wrote: "The tour was a triumphal march, leaving a deep and lasting influence upon the white population, while the story of their travels was told repeatedly in the lodges of the west."

¹⁴A. S. Morton, *op. cit.*, p. 638.

¹⁵*Ibid.*, p. 639.

¹⁶Sanderson, *op. cit.*, p. 176.

¹⁷*Pathfinding on Plain and Prairie*, p. 63.

¹⁸*Ibid.*, p. 242.

¹⁹*On Western Trails in the Early Seventies*, p. 201.

²⁰*Missionary Notices*, series 2, pp. 359, 360.

²¹*Op. cit.*, pp. 187-190.

²²*Milestones of Methodism in Calgary and Canada*, pamphlet, n.d., p. 5: An address delivered by a great Methodist clergyman of Calgary, pastor of Central Methodist Church, 1903-1911, the first Principal of Mount Royal College, 1911-1942. Internal evidence suggests a date about 1925.

In Retrospect

THE REV. WILLIAM CASE, founder of Methodist Indian missions in Canada had the key to success in work among the Indians when at the mission and manual labour school at Alderville he vigorously sought out promising young Indians and educated them to do work among their own people. Case believed in the inherent religious instincts of the Indians, and in their capacity for training and education. He worked with such Indians as John Sunday (of the Mississaugas, a sub-tribe of the Ojibways), Peter Jones and Henry B. Steinhaur. The possibilities for good of this policy of leadership training were amply demonstrated by Henry B. Steinhaur and two of his sons, who like him were trained in Victoria College, Cobourg, and ordained to the Methodist ministry. Looking back after some thirty years' work in the northwest, Steinhaur, himself a full-blooded Ojibway, stated:

Our work in this far North West would be better promoted were native agency employed in the work, such as can speak the language of the natives, who understand their nature, habits, and sympathize with their miserable condition, and would be impelled to promote their elevation in the scale of being.

A foreigner, either as a Missionary or otherwise, will never take so well with the natives of this country, let him be ever so good and kind to them; there is always a distrust on the part of a native to the foreigner, from the fact that the native has been so long down-trodden by the white man.¹

This open secret was not so clearly understood by the McDougalls, although the Rev. George McDougall had served his apprenticeship under Case. Perhaps this was because neither George nor his son John had had much higher education themselves, and did not seem to value it as highly as the Steinhaurs did. The McDougalls employed many native helpers as lay assistants and class leaders, however, among them Maskepetoon, Erasmus, Samson, Pakan and Jonas Big Stoney.

It would seem that The United Church of Canada has done little or nothing to continue the earliest policy, although the work of education for its own sake has been continued. Residential schools such as those at Norway House, Edmonton and Morley have been operated by the church in co-operation with the Dominion Government. But if a young Indian should desire to enter the Christian ministry, no special facilities are offered him in Canada. Perhaps a central training school for workers among the Indians should be founded, with consideration being given to the special needs of the constituency to be served and of the candidates to be trained.

Why the early and successful policy of William Case and Henry Steinhaur should have fallen into neglect so soon is something of a puzzle. Successful it certainly was. John McDougall paid tribute to his father-in-law, the Rev. Henry B. Steinhaur, by calling him "an ideal missionary."² For many years white missionaries in overseas fields have diligently sought to train native clergy and lay workers, that an indigenous church might develop. Why was this policy not applied among the Canadian aborigines, in the face of the chronic shortage of white missionaries to work among the Indians, and the earnest request of the Indians themselves? Indians today are becoming eager for the white man's schooling, as recent statistics show.³ They have repeatedly demonstrated their ability. Their great need is the wherewithal for *self-help*, for leadership training, encouragement, active good will and social integration. All of these the Christian church must provide, without being bound to a pessimistic and unprogressive attitude. Unless white missionaries can be recruited

with the same passion and zeal of the McDougalls for a life-time commitment, or native Indian workers can be found and trained, Indian missions can be expected to continue to suffer as they are today. The Rev. Malcolm C. Macdonald, Secretary of the Board of Home Missions of the United Church, wrote in 1951 that the "solution of the Indian problem" depends upon improvement in three directions: education—and here the Church today recommends non-sectarian, non-segregated day schools, in which Indian children may mingle with other Canadian children; health and social services—and here the Church urges the Government to build public hospitals and sanatoria without denominational affiliations; and religious care. He stated that "Indian mission work is about the most difficult and discouraging of all types carried on" and that "a large number of the native people have not come very far along the road to a higher and finer standard of living. Their backwardness in this regard constitutes a challenge to both Church and State to work with greater energy and intelligence at the task of improving the lot and possibilities of these first Canadians who have so far to go to reach their rightful place in Canadian citizenship."⁴

It remains for both Church and State to take up this challenge vigorously. The Government is now making greater efforts to establish non-sectarian, non-segregated day schools which Indian children may attend with other Canadian children. Hospitals are being provided, but most missionaries report that social services still lag far behind. Some efforts are being made to encourage self-help among the Indians that they may develop their own leaders, but much more needs to be done. More public support and study will be necessary before the Dominion Government will change the Indian Act to remove the legal disabilities under which the treaty Indian now lives.

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